- **METRO / A17** Son of singer-former Councilor Darius Razon killed in car accident
- **BUSINESS / B1** January OFW remittances surge 16.5% to $917M
- **WORLD / A20** Thaksin considers stepping down but only temporarily
- **NEWS / A7** After 1017, GMA rating still very low, says poll

High-fat hospital diet alarms Beltran's wife

NAKU... BAKA PAT! LITSON BIGYAN YAN!

By Norman Bordadora

NO MORE VIP TREATMENT, please.

The wife of detained Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran yesterday made this appeal as she scored the Philippine National Police General Hospital for

HIGH-FAT/ A14

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, March 16, 2006 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 98 P18 website: www.inq7.net

HONASAN

Gringo heads wanted list

PNP-NBI to hunt down 16; 'rogues gallery GMA's idea'

By Armand N. Nocum and Christine Avendaño

FORMER SEN. GREGORIO "GRINGO" HONASAN leads a wanted list of suspected coup plotters who may carry bounties of up to P10 million each, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

As an Army colonel, Honasan led several coup attempts in the second half of the 1980s against then President Corazon Aquino. He was also linked to the coup attempt of the Magdalo group of soldiers in 2003.

Gonzalez said pictures of Honasan and his alleged co-conspirators would be posted in public places, printed in a newspaper and broadcast on television "similar to those used against suspected terrorists and kidnappers."

The justice secretary said the "rogues gallery" was President Macapagal-Arroyo's idea.

Gonzalez said the police and the National Bureau of Investigation were forming a "tracking team" to hunt down Honasan and Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson—among the 16 people against whom police had filed charges of rebellion in connection with their alleged involvement in a plot to overthrow Ms Arroyo.

The plot allegedly was hatched by disgruntled military officers, communist rebels and civilians and was to coincide with the 20th anniversary of Edsa I People Power revolt that toppled the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos on Feb. 24.

Among the 16 alleged conspirators the police charged with rebellion are six party-list representatives—Crispin Beltran and Rafael Mariano of Anakpawis; Satur Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño and Joel

GRINGO/ A6

AFP told: Don't be intoxicated with power

By Philip C. Tubeza, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

DON'T BE INTOXICATED WITH power.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday gave this advice to the Armed Forces of the Philippines after its spokesperson said on Tuesday that the military "can make or break the government."

Biazon, a former AFP chief of staff and Senate national defense committee chair, urged the AFP to explain whether Col. Tristan Kison was expressing his personal views or if he was stating the collective sentiments of the military leadership. If it is personal, he said, the AFP leadership has the obligation to rein in Kison.

He warned the military "not to be intoxicated with a sense of power."

"To claim that it is only the AFP that is keeping the country to-

AFP/ A6

PATRICK CASTILLO/PCPO

"HEROISM, SENSE OF HUMANITY." President Arroyo hails and thanks the search and rescue volunteers at Guinsaugon, Southern Leyte, who included eight foreign rescue units, 57 units from the military and police, 13 civilians and 238 individual volunteers. Ms Arroyo ushers Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias (left) and DSWD Secretary Esperanza Cabral to the thanksgiving luncheon at the Palace.

Media warned: No special treatment

YET ANOTHER WARNING WAS issued yesterday to the media, with Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye saying that journalists would not be accorded special treatment in the crackdown against those suspected to be engaged in destabilization.

But Bunye said the government would honor basic rights and welcome challenges in court of any action it might take, Agence France-Presse said in a report.

"The press is not a target of censorship, but some members of the press have been charged with violations of law and shall be prosecuted just like any ordinary citizen," Bunye said in a statement.

"We believe in the freedom of the press, but we do not believe in special treatment of media practitioners who run afoul of the law," he said.

He added that journalists

MEDIA WARNED/ A6

Male nurse wants to be a she legally

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—A male nurse who underwent a sex-change procedure abroad is asking the local court for a legal change in gender to female, but the government prosecutor is against the idea.

The 33-year-old man has petitioned the Regional Trial Court to officially revise the sex entry in his birth certificate and to direct the civil registrar of Mankayan town, where he was born on Dec. 7, 1972, to make the correction.

His lawyer asked the INQUIRER not to reveal her client's name for fear that its publication might subject him to ridicule.

MALE NURSE/ A14

Nene fumes he's in Palace video on 'enemies of the state'

By TJ Burgonio and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SENATE MINORITY LEADER Aquilino Pimentel Jr. is fuming over the showing of a documentary portraying him on national TV as an "enemy of the state."

"This is an insidious portrayal of me as a destabilizer," Pimentel said in an interview yesterday.

Pimentel took the Senate floor on Tuesday afternoon to denounce the documentary, which is being aired on government TV stations and being distributed in compact disc.

"To my mind, it is an attempt to silence me by in effect terrorizing me as an enemy of the state."

The documentary, dubbed "Paglaban sa Kataksilan 1017," details an alleged plot by an alliance of military and communist rebels and the opposition to overthrow the Arroyo administration.

Pimentel said he had never taken part in rebellion, sedition, treason or coup d'etat from the time he fought the martial law regime until he became a senator and leader of the opposition in the Senate.

Pimentel was jailed on three separate occasions during martial rule.

"I was not and am not giving aid and comfort to the enemy. I am calling for the removal of Ms Arroyo through peaceful means, but that is not treason," he said in his speech.

"If there is an enemy of the state in the country today, it is none other than that lady who is pretending to be the President of this country in Malacañang. She is the enemy of the state," Pimentel said.

The alleged plot led President Macapagal-Arroyo to issue on Feb. 24 Proclamation No. 1017 that placed the country under a state of emergency. She lifted the proclamation a week later.

The documentary shows a footage of Pimentel enjoying a laugh at the foot of the monument of the late Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. in Makati City

NENE FUMES/ A14

US cheers autistic basketball player: 20 pts in 4 mins

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush is the latest in a string of high-profile fans to call on Jason McElwain, the autistic basketball manager who drew national cheers by scoring 20 points in four minutes for his high school team.

On his way to Canandaigua, New York, on Tuesday to speak at Medicare events, Bush stopped at an airport near here and greeted McElwain—accompanied by his parents and coach—and called him "a special person."

"Our country was captivated by an amazing story on the basketball court," Bush told reporters gathered on the tarmac, his arm draped around the 17-year-old senior, with Air Force One, the presidential jet, in the background.

US CHEERS/ A5

TOOTS SOBERANO FOR NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

THEY'RE THE TOP
Two women are among the topnotchers of the Mandirigmang Dangal ng Lahi (Mandala) PMA Class 2006 graduating this month. From left is class valedictorian Ariel Toledo, cadets Francis Rosales, Romel Sotero, Ethelbert Aaron Kiunisala, Michael Gotong, Amina Abdula, Noah Hernandez, Ermin Soloren, Joe Vergel Santos and Joy Peñaloza. (*Story on Page A16.*)

Giant mall opens 1st breastfeeding station

By Christian V. Esguerra

A 19-YEAR-OLD MOTHER WAS BREASTFEEDING HER baby in a popular shopping mall when a security guard called her attention.

"Ma'am, you can't do that here. Please go to the comfort room," he told her.

Insulted, the young woman retorted: "Why, do you eat in the toilet?" And she continued nursing her child.

The incident—just one of many showing how mothers are prevented from breastfeeding in public—left a strong impression on Dr. Elvira Henares-Esguerra, a lactation consultant and founder of the group called Children for Breastfeeding.

Esguerra's group has managed to convince tycoon Henry Sy to designate a "breastfeeding station" for nursing mothers at his SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City.

The pink, glass-paneled station is in the basement of the Megamall's building A, between the food court and the ice skating rink. It has a kitchen counter and a sofa

GIANT MALL/ A14

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of Luzon and Visayas and the whole of Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/03/15/06

Second FrontPage

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

SC nixes gov't appeal on Piatco

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO ERMITA SAID YESTERday that the government has no choice but to pay P3 billion to the consortium that built the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's controversial Terminal 3 now that the Supreme Court has thrown out a second appeal asking the court to reconsider an earlier ruling ordering the government to pay up.

Ermita made the statement after the high court released a one-page resolution denying "with finality" a second motion filed by the government last Feb. 17 asking the court to reconsider a ruling it made in December ordering the government to pay Philippine International Airport Terminals Corp. (Piatco) P3 billion for the terminal, which the government had had expropriated earlier.

The court said the government's second motion for reconsideration was a "prohibited pleading" and did not merit consideration.

Apprised of the new ruling, Ermita told reporters that the government will comply with the court's decision and that it was awaiting the report of an agency inspecting the terminal and assessing its actual value.

He said administration would also ask the court whether it would be legal for it to enter into contracts with other group's for the terminal's operations after paying Piatco the P3 billion as down payment.

Ermita said the government was more wary of the pending arbitration case filed by Piatco's German shareholder, Fraport AG, in Washington.

"The case in Washington DC might be jeopardized if we open because we have been claiming that the airport is not safe, it is not complete, and therefore the facility cannot be used," Ermita said, noting that the the terminal was still 2 to 3 percent unfinished.

"The government's plan is to have an opening but not necessarily a grand opening. Some portions of the airport will be utilized for regional operations, for Southeast Asia only and not Europe or America," Ermita said.

In its December ruling, the Supreme Court ordered a lower court handling the Piatco case to determine the total just compensation due to the claimants within 60 days. But Judge Henrick Gingoyon of the Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 117 was killed last Dec. 31.

In its second appeal, the government said that Piatco's sub-contractors Takenaka Corp. and Asahikosan Corp., which helped in the construction of the terminal, were entitled to compensation more than Piatco itself. *Tetch Torres, Lira Dalangin-Fernandez, INQ7.net; Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Imelda open to settlement says lawyer

IMELDA MARCOS IS OPEN TO negotiating a settlement with the government not only for the Marcos jewelry collection but for the entirety of the assets and properties she and her husband, the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, are alleged to have acquired illegally.

Imelda's lawyer, Roberto Sison, said a compromise settlement would be a "pragmatic approach" to end almost two decades of litigation.

"My client is open to a negotiation for everything. What we want is a pacific settlement. That's everything. Let's finish this. I think it is the pragmatic approach rather than continue fighting over these assets," said Sison.

The lawyer said his statements were based on his last meeting with the former First Lady on Wednesday.

Sison said the settlement should cover all assets not only in the Philippines but also in the United States and Europe.

Sison's declaration comes on the heels of recent statements from the Presidential Commission on Good Government, the agency tasked to recover the Marcos ill-gotten wealth, that a compromise deal on the Marcos jewelry could be the start of an overall settlement.

Imelda was "hopeful" that a settlement, involving a surrender of the assets in exchange for the dropping of the civil cases could be reached with the PCGG, Sison said.

"She has [a] very positive outlook on this and she is hopeful that everything will be finished. If we can have it tomorrow, then let's have it tomorrow," Sison said, adding that they would wait for the PCGG to make the first move.

"If it's the PCGG who is looking at a settlement, we will wait for them," he said.

PCGG Commissioner Ricardo Abcede said that the government would go for a 70 to 30 percent sharing agreement in favor of the government. Sison said the Marcos side had no position on this yet. *Alcuin Papa*

Mike A files libel case vs Jinggoy

By Jocelyn R. Uy and TJ Burgonio

FIRST GENTLEMAN JOSE MIGUEL ARroyo filed yesterday at the Pasay City prosecutor's office a P10-million libel suit against Sen. Jinggoy Estrada for linking him to big-time smuggling.

Accompanied by his lawyer, Melanie Trinidad, Arroyo filed his complaint before the office of acting city prosecutor Elmer Mitra at 10 a.m. He refused to speak with the media, but his lawyer said Arroyo has decided to file the criminal case against the young Estrada because "his rights have been violated and he'd like to reclaim his rights using the proper channels."

Estrada maintained he did not say anything that besmirched the reputation of Arroyo, but said that he was ready to face him in court.

"Do you consider this a libelous statement? Any lawyer here would agree that I did not utter a libelous statement," Estrada said in a privilege speech after reading the supposedly libelous statement he made to the media a few days ago.

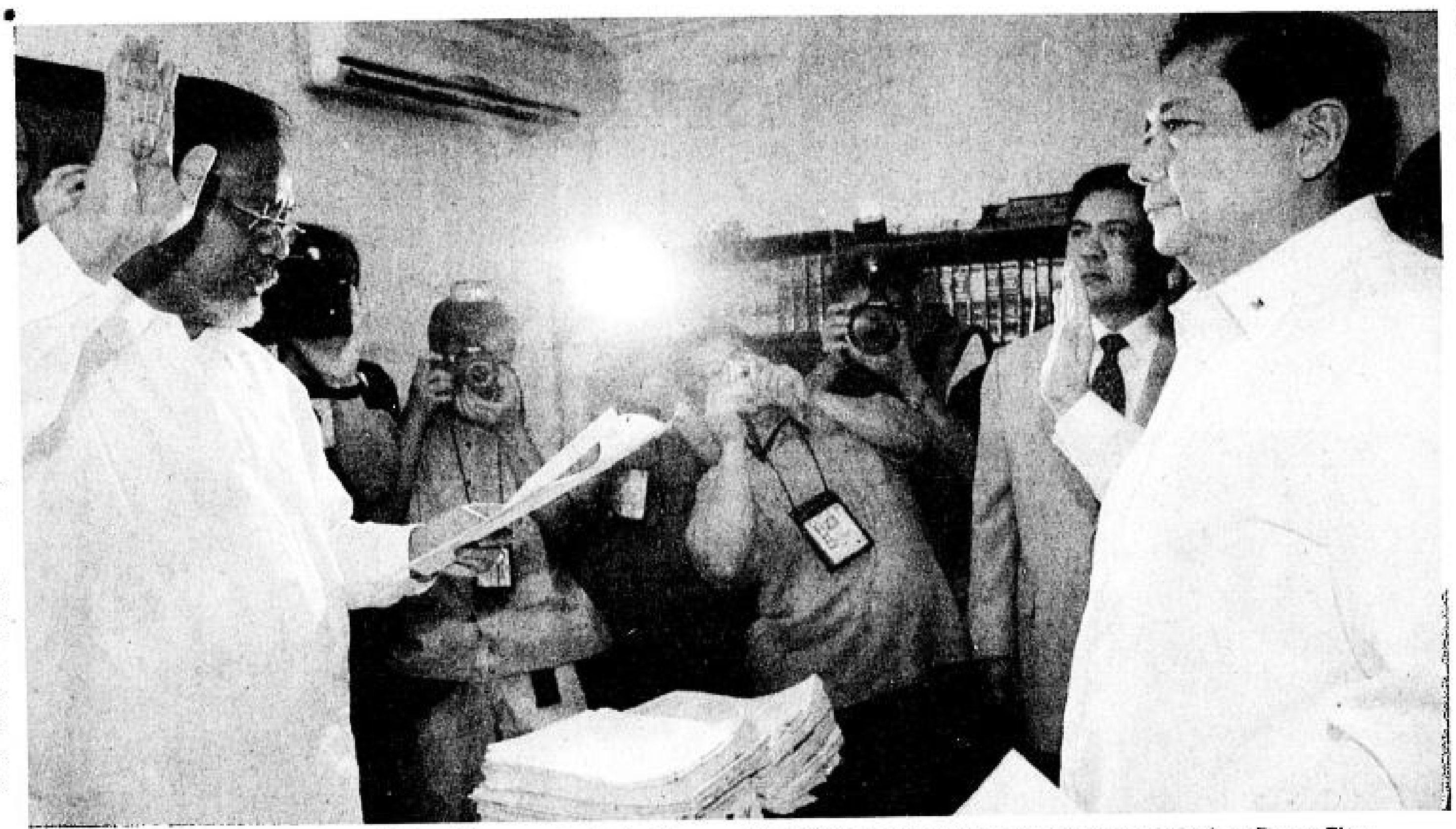
Estrada had claimed that alleged big-time smuggler Samuel Lee, who was arrested a few days ago, was associated with Vicky Toh and that Toh had special relations with the First Gentleman.

He said he welcomed the case because it will afford him the chance to refute the allegations and prove that the complaint is a mere political harassment to stop him "from exposing anomalies committed under this illegitimate administration."

The senator said that he was ready to meet Arroyo "face to face" as long as he doesn't wield his powers to influence the proceedings at the Pasay prosecutor's office.

Arroyo, in his complaint, said Estrada's allegations of his links with big-time smugglers were "baseless and utterly false."

Trinidad said that it was time that Estrada realized "that he cannot go on destroying other people's reputation while he hides under the cloak of parliamentary immunity."



UNDER OATH, First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo attests to his complaint of libel against Sen. Jinggoy Estrada before Pasay City prosecutor Elmer Mitra.

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- Analyzing Investment Options
- Assessing Business Risk

Finance and Stability
- Matching Financing to Investments
- Structuring Capital Requirements
- Assessing Financial Risk

Control and Performance Steering
- Analyzing Information Needs
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SOLGEN'S EXIT

Gonzalez: Benipayo did his best on 1017, but ...

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ YESterday admitted that resigned Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo did make "inconsistent" statements during the oral arguments on Presidential Proclamation 1017 last week.

But he said it was not enough reason for the Palace to fire Benipayo.

Gonzalez said that contrary to reports that Malacañang was unhappy with Benipayo's defense of the proclamation that placed the country under a state of national emergency, he believes Benipayo had done his best.

"Well, nobody is perfect in performing his job. I know he was doing his best...Nobody is perfect," Gonzalez said in phone interview.

Malacañang yesterday insisted that Benipayo resigned and was not sacked.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the President respected Benipayo's decision and accepted his resignation "with regret."

"We would prefer not to discuss or speculate on the reasons behind his decision to quit as this is a matter between him and the appointing authority," Bunye said in a statement.

Palace thankful

He appealed to the media "to spare the good man from unfair innuendo," as he stressed that the Palace was very thankful to Benipayo for "services he rendered to the people."

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said that Benipayo's decision to quit was a "loss to the government."

Benipayo submitted his resignation on Monday, telling Gonzalez that he wanted to go back to private life and resume his law practice.

An unnamed official at the Solicitor General's Office said Benipayo was forced out of office by Malacañang which was unhappy with Benipayo's defense of Proclamation 1017.

During oral arguments before the Supreme Court on March 7, Benipayo defended the proclamation but acknowledged that its implementation may have been flawed.

At one point he laughed and apologized for referring to Ms Arroyo's decree as Proclamation 1081, which was the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' martial law declaration.

In reply to a question by one of the justices, he said he had "nothing to do" with the drafting of PP1017.

Gonzalez downplayed the effects of Benipayo's inconsistent statements and blamed the media for blowing the matter out of proportion.

"Sometimes the media interprets the performance of government officials using its own yardstick, which is unfair," he said.

He said there was no reason for him or the President or Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Eduardo Nachura to berate Benipayo on the matter.

"Nobody talked to him [about it] and I'm sure the President did not," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said Benipayo's resignation would not affect the government's cases before the high court which, besides PP 1017, include the calibrated pre-emptive response policy and Executive Order 464, which bans executive and military officials from appearing in congressional hearings.

Nachura best replacement

As for Benipayo's replacement, Gonzalez said he preferred Nachura above the others.

"I think he is the best at this time. He is a constitutional expert. I think he is ready for debates, he has been debating with congressmen, where the worst questions are asked. I'm sure Nachura can stand up to oral argument," he said.

The general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority Alfonso Cusi yesterday said he hoped Benipayo's departure would not set back the cases involving the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

The Miaa has planned on a "rolling opening" of the mothballed terminal, although it would not say exactly when this would take place.

But it has set a March 31 deadline for the completion of all the finishing touches on the terminal.

It also announced that the Cebu Pacific airline would like to conduct test flights out of Naia 3.

The issue of Naia 3 was tackled during the Cabinet meeting in Cebu the other day, Cusi said, "because it is the desire of President Arroyo to have the terminal opened."

"We are thinking of formulas on how we could have it opened. But we understand that there are legal constraints that have to be hurdled," Cusi said.

Cusi said that there are several other lawyers handling the Naia 3 cases.

The terminal's original builder, the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. has filed cases before international arbitration courts over the issue of just compensation after the government expropriated Naia 3 in 2004. *Reports from Christine Avendaño and Nikko Dizon*

ABC 5 says incriminating tape vs Gen. Lim does not exist

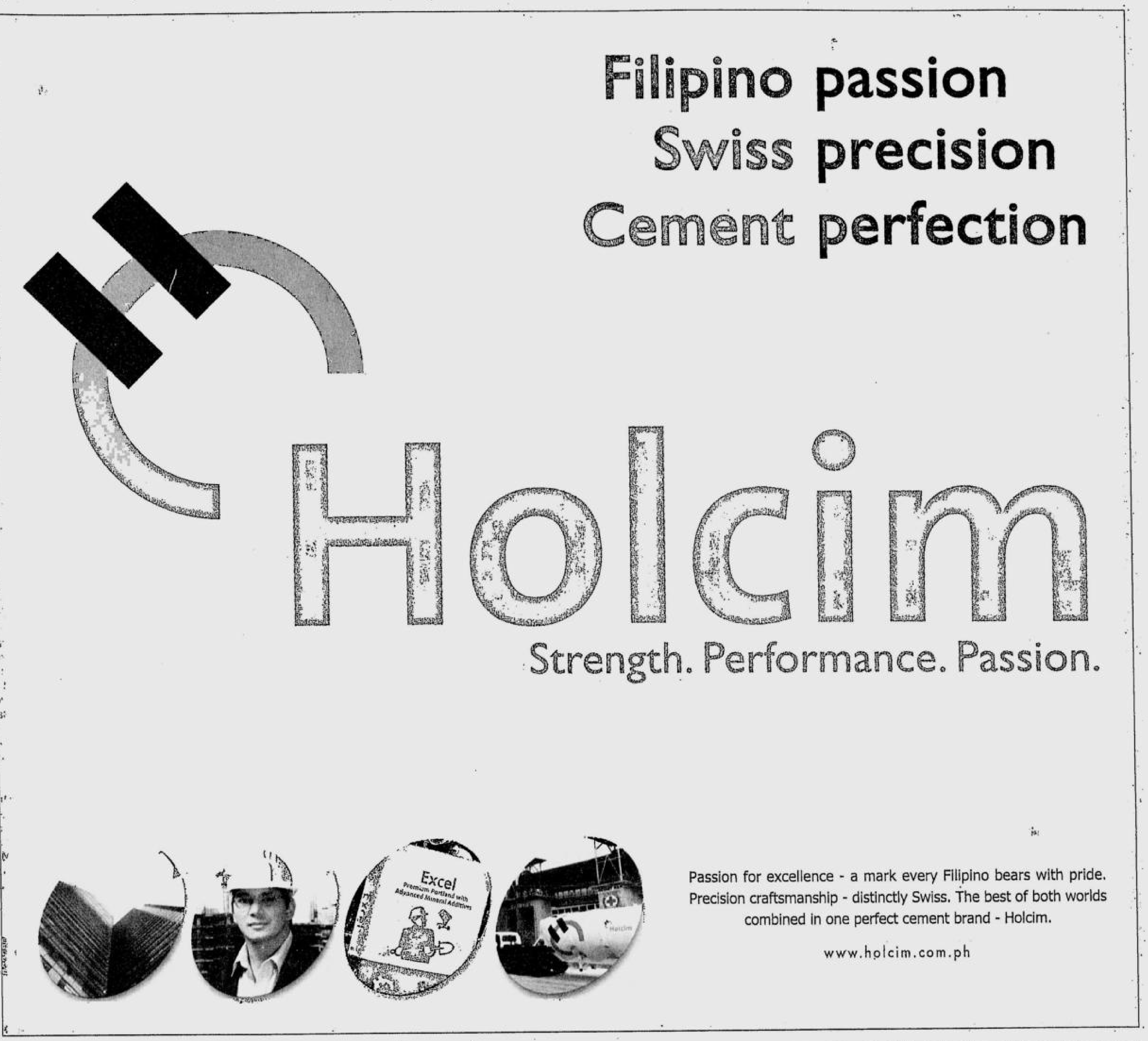
A TOP OFFICIAL OF THE ABC 5 television network has denied that the TV station has a videotape interview showing Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim expressing his withdrawal of support from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a letter to the National Bureau of Investigation dated March 14, Regalado Galura, the network's chief operating officer and executive vice president, said he had no personal knowledge of and was "not in possession" of any such videotape.

NBI officer in charge Nestor Mantaring, however, said bureau operatives would continue their search for the tape despite ABC 5's denial.

"Perhaps we can get a copy of the videotape from other sources," he said.

Mantaring also said he would ask Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor for additional information concerning the interview. *Margaux C. Ortiz*



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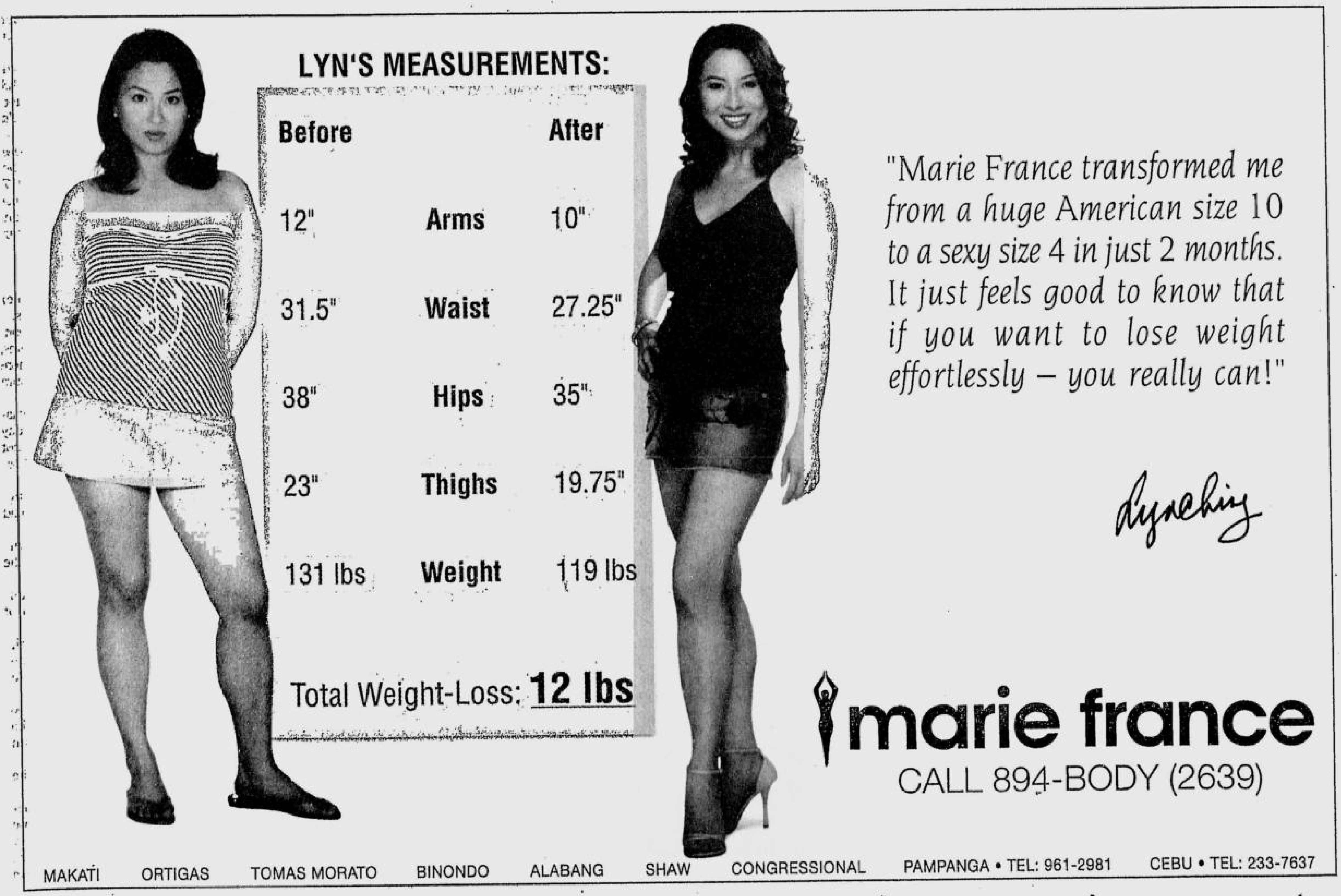

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Isabatas
HB 3773

Let the people choose

So they can send their kids to school

We take exception to the misinformation that Couples for Christ (CFC) recently peddled to the public about House Bill 3773, the Responsible Parenthood and Population Management Act of 2005. That the ad came out on March 8, International Women's Day, is an insult to women in the Philippines and around the world who have struggled long and hard to uphold and exercise their right to reproductive self-determination, in order to ensure a better quality of life for themselves and their children. These are the facts:

- **HB 3773 encourages but does not impose two children as the ideal family size.** It offers *scholarships at the tertiary level* -- not free college education - as incentives to poor students with academic aptitude who come from two-child families. But it does not prevent poor students from families with more than two children from availing of tertiary scholarships.

  > *Sec. 12. Ideal Family Size. - In order to attain the desired population growth rate, the State shall encourage two children as the ideal family size. However, this provision shall not be mandatory or compulsory and no punitive action may be imposed on couples having more than two children. Children from these families shall have preference in the grant of scholarships at the tertiary level, taking into consideration the financial need and academic aptitude of the grantees.*

- **The term "reproductive health," as defined and used in HB 3773, is not abortion.** In fact, it is meant to reduce cases of abortion by making both natural and modern family planning methods available and accessible to couples (Sec. 4-c).
- **The bill is anchored on the principle of informed choice.** It aims to make both natural and modern family planning information and services available and accessible to parents. It ensures the parents' right to choose which method to use in planning the number and spacing of their children based on their cultural and religious convictions (Secs. 3-c and 3-d).

HB 3773 responds to the need for a comprehensive national policy on reproductive health and responsible parenthood in four ways:

- **HB 3773 is pro-quality of life.** It responds to the widespread lack of access to family planning information and services that threatens the lives of women and children. More than 60 percent of all pregnancies in the country are high-risk and result in alarming death rates for poor mothers, infants and children less than five years old (*National Demographic and Health Survey, 1998 and 2003; State of the Philippine Population Report, 2000*).
- **HB 3773 is pro-poor.** It responds to the stark reality that the bigger the family size, the poorer the family. Around 57% of Filipino families with nine or more children are poor, compared with only 15.7% of families with two children. A majority of all school dropouts, child laborers and malnourished children come from poor families with five or more children (*UP School of Economics, 2004*).
- **HB 3773 is pro-women.** It responds to the desire of poor women, who want fewer children but end up bearing more. They have three times more children than the rich, a ratio of 5 to 2. The same survey says Filipino women on the average want only 2.5 children, and around 61% of currently married women do not want more children irrespective of the number of children they have (*NDHS 2003*).
- **HB 3773 is pro-people.** It responds to the widespread clamor for family planning. Nearly all Filipinos in 2004 (97%) say it is important to control one's fertility or plan one's family – more than the 94% who held the same view in December 2000 (*Pulse Asia, Feb. 2004*). Ironically, CFC is opposing funding for family planning programs, but it availed itself of P50 million from the Department of Health in 2003 to educate couples on natural family planning. How effectively did they use such a huge amount of public funds for this purpose? Shouldn't it faithfully account for those funds?

Filipinos all dream of a better quality of life. Are we going to deprive them of a fighting chance to achieve just that by denying them the freedom to choose how to plan their families? Do we want to continue putting the lives of women and their children at risk by letting groups, such as the CFC, make false claims and unfounded accusations about HB 3773? Shouldn't CFC be among those that give the good example of integrity and accuracy?

Heed the people's plea. Read the bill and support the passage of HB 3773.

Benjamin De Leon
President, The Forum for Family Planning and Development Inc.

Atty. Rhodora Roy Raterta
Executive Director, Family Planning Organization of thePhilippines (FPOP)

Elizabeth Angsioco
National Chairperson, Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines (DSWP)

Hon. Annabelle C. Tangson
Aurora *Vice Governor* and *Chairperson*, National Organizing Committee of the Local Legislators' League on Population and Development (NOC-3LPD)

Hon. Corazon "Babes" Del Mundo
Secretary General, Philippine Councilors League and *Vice-Chairperson*, National Organizing Committee of the Local Legislators' League on Population and Development (NOC-3LPD)

Hon. Nijar Hassan
Board Member, Sulu

Hon. Arnuldo Sabalberino
Board Member, Eastern Samar

Bishop Fred Magbanua
Chairperson, Interfaith Partnership for the Promotion of Responsible Parenthood and Family Planning

Atty. Marlon J. Manuel
Executive Director, Sentrong Alternatibong Lingap Panlegal (SALIGAN)

Karen Tañada
Executive Director, Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute

Florencia Casanova - Dorotan
Chairperson, Women's Action Network for Development (WAND)

Atty. Maria Barcenilla
Executive Director, Women's Legal Advocacy and Defense Foundation (WomenLead)

Hon. Patricia M. Sarenas
National Coordinator, Mothers for Peace and *Commissioner*, Mindanao Commission on Women

Perfecto S. Uysinco
Executive Director, TRI-DEV Specialist Foundation, Inc.

Remedios Rikken
Executive Committee, Abansel Pinay

Expectacion Gonzales
Abansel Pinay – Nueva Ecija Chapter

Malou S. Marin
Executive Director, Action for Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE)

Nini Tolentino-Balaquio
Gender Equity Program Coordinator, Zone One Tondo Organization (ZOTO)

Dr. Ernesto M. Pernia
Professor, School of Economics, University of the Philippines

Dr. Josefina V. Cabigon
Philippine Population Association

Dr. Zelda Zablan
Professor, UP-Population Institute (UPPI)

Dr. Edna E. A. Co
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Dr. Ederlinda M. Fernandez
Director, Women's Research and Resource Center, Western Mindanao State University

Teresita F. Santiago-Rey
Project Development Officer, Metro Naga Development Council / Metro Naga Investment Promotion Office and *Vice - Chairprerson*, Paralegal Sa Barangay - Naga City (volunteer community work)

Professor Elizabeth A. Pangalangan
Project Director, Reproductive Health, Rights and Ethics Center for Studies and Training (REPROCEN)

Atty. Nolito Quilang
Packard – Gates Fellow

Ramon D. San Pascual
Executive Director, Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Foundation, Inc. (PLCPD)

Jimmy Coguerra
Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)

Mario Victor Baang
Chairperson, Calbayog Reproductive Health Advocacy Network (CARHAN)

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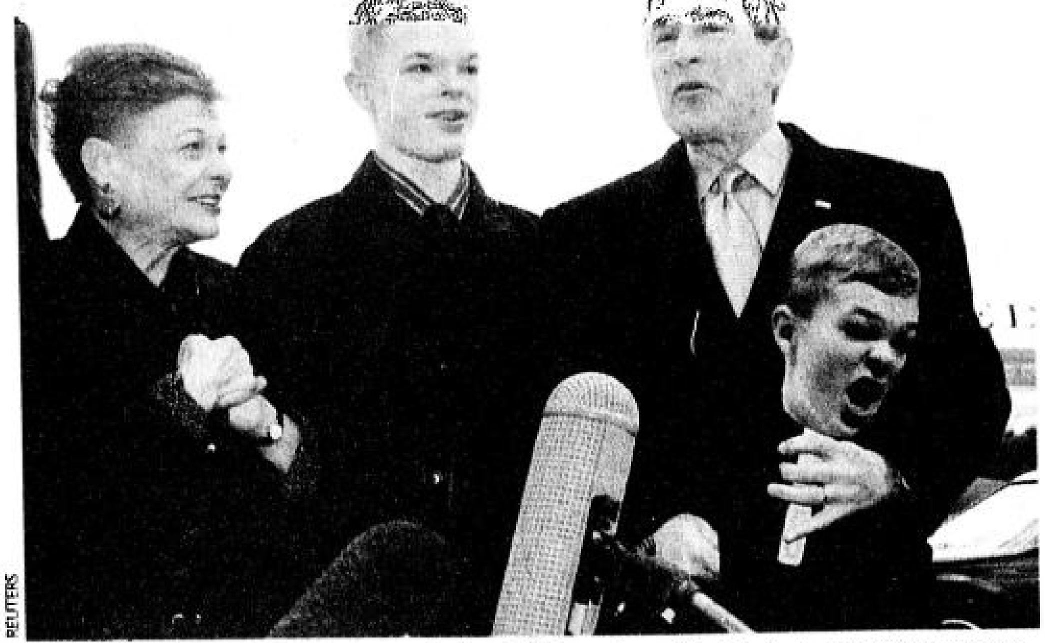

REUTERS

LOOK WHO'S ROOTING for varsity basketball player Jason McElwain (center; his mother is at his right). No less than US President George W. Bush. But then McElwain, a high school senior in Rochester, New York, playing ball for the first time ever, made sports history and touched the hearts of people everywhere.

US cheers ...

From page A1

"It's the story of a young man who found his touch on the basketball court, which, in turn, touched the hearts of citizens all around the country."

Brain abnormality

Autism is a developmental disability resulting from the abnormal functioning of the brain. It affects a person's communication skills and social interactions.

It typically appears during the first three years of a person's life, and is present in 15 to 20 out of every 10,000 live births. It is four times more common in males than in females.

Bush joked that if his aging body would let him return to the basketball court, he'd want a lesson from McElwain.

Because of his autism, McElwain didn't begin talking until he was 5 years old and still lacks some social skills. Despite suffering from the little understood developmental disorder, he has served as all-around motivator for the Greece Athena High School basketball team, in Greece, a Rochester suburb of New York.

Jaw-dropping performance

Last month, the coach had him suit up for the final home game of the season and put him in with four minutes to go when the team opened a large lead. In his first and only appearance for the team, the 5-foot-6 manager hit six 3-point shots and a 2-pointer and was carried off the court on his teammates' shoulders.

The jaw-dropping performance was caught on a student video and made national news. His parents have received a flood of calls from Hollywood.

Bush said he learned about McElwain from seeing him on TV.

"I wept, just like a lot of other people did," he said, as McElwain beamed beside him.

Some traits

Autism affects each individual differently. Autistic persons may exhibit some of the following traits:

- Resistance to change.
- Obsessive attachment to objects.
- Nonresponsiveness to verbal cues.
- Preference for being alone.
- Difficulty in interacting with people or expressing needs.
- Little or no eye contact.
- Repeating words or phrases.
- Laughing or crying for no apparent reason.
- Tantrums.
- Not wanting to be cuddled.
- Unresponsiveness to normal teaching methods.
- Sustained odd play.
- Spinning objects.
- Apparent oversensitivity or undersensitivity to pain.
- Physical overactivity or underactivity.
- Uneven motor skills.
- No real fears of danger.

'Rain Man'

Perhaps the most famous film about autism is the Oscar-winning movie "Rain Man," starring Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise. It tells the story of Raymond Babbitt, an autistic savant, or someone with extraordinary mental activities.

Babbitt had memorized names and corresponding telephone numbers listed in a residential directory up to surnames starting with the letter "G." He was also adept in mathematics. *With a report from Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

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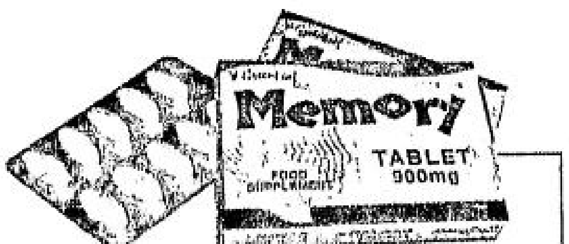

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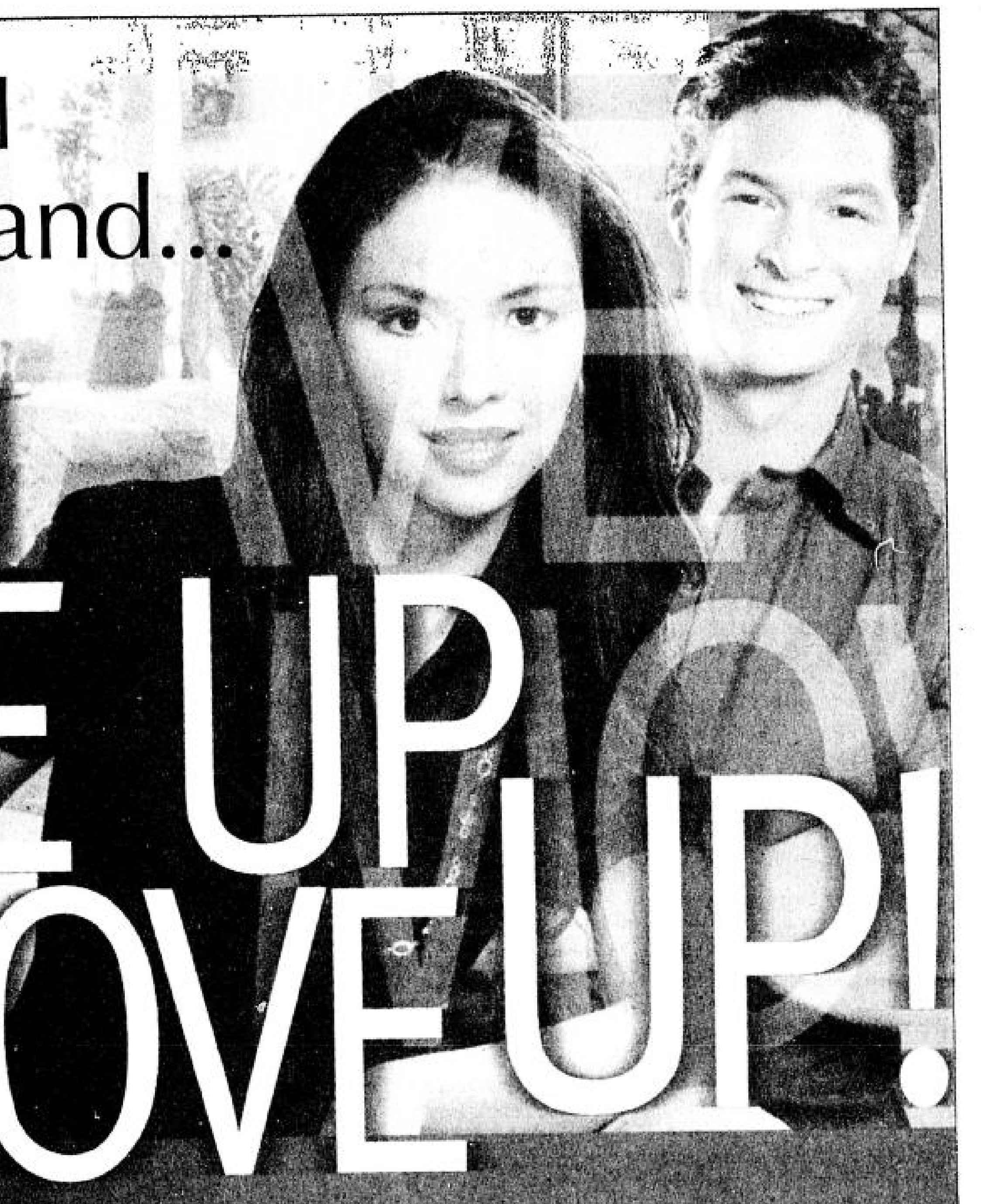

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Gringo heads wanted list of 16 'conspirators'

From page A1

Virador of Bayan Muna; and, Liza Maza of Gabriela.

Beltran is in police custody while the five others sought refuge in the House of Representatives to avoid arrest.

The 16 also include CPP founding chair Jose Maria Sison, National Democratic Front spokesperson Luis Jalandoni, CPP central committee officials Benito and Wilma Tiamzon, Bayan secretary general Nathaniel Santiago, NDF commanding officer Tirso Alcantara, and NDF Bicol regional party head Sotero Llamas.

Also charged with crimes of rebellion and coup were lawyer Christopher Belmonte, retired Col. Jake Malajacan and retired Capt. Felix Turingan; First Lieutenants Angelbert Gay and Patricio Bumidang, members of the Magdalo; and a person with an alias.

50 others

Their cases are entirely different from those filed against some 50 leftist personalties in the Department of Justice.

Asked who would be on the wanted list, Gonzalez said people who were recently charged with rebellion and who had gone in hiding.

"We'll go after those who have been charged and who have submerged (sic) and who continue to pose danger to national security," he said.

Tracking team

Gonzalez said he had already formed a "tracking team" of 10 NBI men "to help monitor the movement of people who [went underground]."

He acknowledged that the wanted list could go as high as 50 but the DOJ would only display the faces of the top 10 or 20 suspected coup plotters.

"If you can put a rogues gallery and a bounty against kidnap for ransom people, why not this one," he said.

Amount of bounties not final

Gonzalez said the bounties were not yet final.

"The basic subject matter there is to offer reward. We cannot even agree on how much ... we cannot give P500,000 for the name of Ka Roger," he said.

IN THE KNOW

Honasan history

FORMER SEN. GREGORIO Honasan has been involved in several coup attempts in the span of almost two decades.

He has been tagged in the November 1986, July 1987 and December 1989 coup attempts against the Aquino administration but was granted amnesty in 1995, the same year he won in the senatorial elections.

He was also charged with rebellion for being one of the alleged principal instigators of the May 1 siege of Malacañang in 2001, when loyalists of ousted President Joseph Estrada stormed the Palace days after Estrada was arrested. Other alleged instigators were Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Panfilo Lacson, Ernesto Maceda and Juan Ponce Enrile.

On Aug. 4, 2003, he was charged with coup d'etat for masterminding the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

Last month, he was charged again with rebellion, this time for his alleged involvement in the plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo. ***Kate Pedroso, PDI Research***

Some members of the Palace cluster on intelligence wanted the amount to go as high as P10 million per head.

Gonzalez said the money for the program would come from the police, but the list of those to be hunted down would come from the military.

About 30 military officers and men mostly from the elite Army Scout Ranger unit have either been sacked or are being investigated.

Enough evidence

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor called on Honasan to surrender, saying the government was willing to hold a dialogue with him.

"My appeal to Gringo Honasan is for him to face the law and the case against him if he says he is innocent," Defensor said. "We are willing to help him in arranging his surrender and to face his case."

Defensor said government prosecutors had gathered enough evidence to implicate Honasan in last month's plot that forced Ms Arroyo to place the country under a state of national emergency for a week.

Honasan disappeared from public view shortly before Ms Arroyo invoked emergency powers last month.

Others to be investigated

Gonzalez said that apart from the 16, he was also holding another list of personalities who may be investigated in connection with the plot.

He refused to divulge any names, but said his office was "monitoring" among others the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, which had published stories about corruption and fraud in government.

Honasan not involved

In Cebu City, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday said he was willing to testify that Honasan was not involved in the Oakwood mutiny.

Biazon said it was he who asked Honasan to accompany him to Oakwood residential hotel and to talk with the Magdalo soldiers so that bloodshed could be avoided.

"We helped establish the line of communication. Our role there was not negotiators but we were just opening the channels of communication," Biazon said.

He advised those who linked Honasan to the mutiny to build up the case against him and not just throw baseless accusations.

Biazon also criticized Ms Arroyo's moves to visit military camps and talk to soldiers.

He said the move of the President showed that she does not have the full support of the military. *With reports from Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau and AFP*

AFP told: Don't be intoxicated with power

From page A1

gether is the height of arrogance," Biazon said in a statement.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday conceded that the military played a "major role" in keeping President Macapagal-Arroyo in power during the Feb. 24 coup attempt that had prompted her to proclaim a state of national emergency for a week.

"We cannot say the President is not in control. The most important thing is that the armed services—the military and police—are living up to their role by respecting the Constitution and the Commander in Chief," Ermita said.

AFP more important

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the President had been seeking reconciliation with opposition politicians but after five years of trying they had not come to the peace table in good faith.

Defensor said this was the reason why soothing a restive military was more important to the President than talking peace with former Presidents Joseph Estrada and Corazon Aquino.

"Any reconciliation effort should be mutually acceptable. It's hard to reach out to people that continue to destabilize the government," Defensor said. He added that although there were disgruntled elements in the military, the President was confident "the entire military remained loyal."

Also yesterday, Kison said that the military would not wrest power from Ms Arroyo, citing two historical precedents—the people power revolutions in 1986 and 2001 that ousted Presidents Ferdinand Marcos and Estrada and installed civilian governments.

"That is the history of the military toeing the line of the civilian supremacy over the military, so the insinuations about the President being a hostage of the military is not true," said Kison.

Likened to insurgents

Biazon raised a howl after Kison on Tuesday knocked down a plan by the minority in the House of Representatives to hold a dialogue with soldiers on the current unrest in the military without permission of the unit commanders. Kison, Biazon said, likened the politicians to communist insurgents.

Kison said the politicians' planned dialogue would be considered "an interference" in military affairs and would be met with "necessary action."

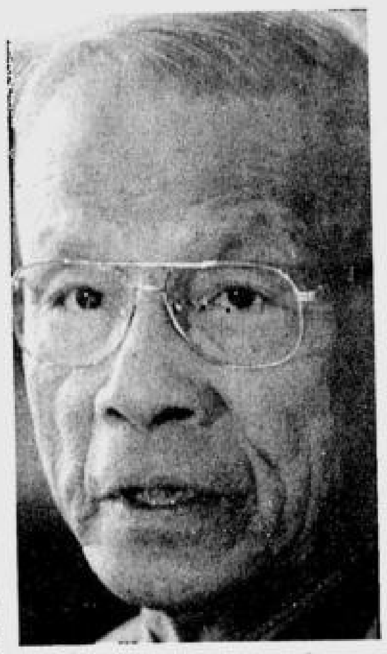
Biazon said that to regard the legitimate political opposition as among the enemies of the state was "sending a chill along the spine of freedom-loving people."

"Martial law has not yet been declared and yet the military arrogated [unto] itself the power to intervene in the political and institutional process of this democracy," he said.

Biazon said the military had "no business prescribing restraints upon political institutions, including the legitimate political opposition."

"These remarks of Colonel Kison have reduced the Office of the presidency to a mere stamp pad of the AFP's bidding and all the other democratic institutions and institutional processes put in adversarial position," he said. This is a "no-contest situation considering that the AFP has the brute force of arms," Biazon said.

"These restraints now prescribed by Colonel Kison cannot tie up the hands of the representatives of all the Filipino people and that is Congress. And soldiers are also constituents of these duly elected representatives of the people," he said.



BIAZON: Height of arrogance

DEFENSOR: Soothing AFP more important

Flaunting it

Sen. Joker Arroyo said Kison's statement on Tuesday confirmed his proposition that the military was "now the one calling the shots."

"The AFP is now in the saddle and in a position to dictate the terms of what the government should do," Arroyo said.

"They are not even embarrassed. They are now flaunting it with no restraint at all. This poses a problem because they can smell the power and they're sniffing it now and we don't know when they will move," he added.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said Kison's "high-handed" view made it appear that the Armed Forces had taken a "messianic role" in the country's affairs.

"It feels discomforting," he said. "Worse, he sounded like they are only after GMA's political survival," Lacson said.

Election fraud

"I challenge the AFP to stand up and preserve its integrity by denouncing its top officers who remain tainted by election fraud. They should also care about the survival of the people and our democratic institutions that are greatly weakened by Malacañang's disregard for the constitutional and legal processes," he said.

"Sadly, that is exactly the picture of our country today—power is abused, rights are violated, justice is dictated, and worst, even the strongest symbol of our democracy, the media, [are] threatened," Lacson added.

While saying that he doubted that the military could dictate on the administration, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile warned that it could oust the President if she did not do her job.

"At least, that's something I know of because I stayed with them for 17 years," said Enrile who served as defense secretary under Presidents Marcos and Aquino.

"Now, if they get angry with the President, if she no longer does her real work, then they will oust her," he said.

Not kingmakers

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said military officials should not delude themselves into thinking they were "kingmakers."

"It is fortunate that the military today has decided to observe the chain of command. But they do not have the power to push the button that will eject President Arroyo out of the Palace," said Santiago, a staunch supporter of Ms Arroyo.

"Since the 1990s, military dictatorships all over the world have gone out of favor. International law has been unable to find grounds for declaring a military dictatorship as a legitimate government," she said.

"If some people in the military think that because they are purportedly kingmakers, they may as well be the kings, they should read history for the lesson that a subordinate who has become a power addict is usually decapitated by an irate people," she said.

In a privilege speech, Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez said the President had no one to blame but herself for the apparent arrogance of the Armed Forces.

GMA edicts emboldened AFP

Golez, who had served as Ms Arroyo's national security adviser, said that she "emboldened" the military by issuing Executive Order No. 464, which bars officials from attending congressional hearings without her permission, and Proclamation No. 1017, which placed the country under a weeklong emergency.

These presidential directives "challenged the constitutional principle of civilian supremacy over the military," thus giving the AFP an excuse not to honor congressional summonses, said the lawmaker.

Interpellating Golez, Alagad party-list Rep. Rodante Marcoleta disagreed, saying he found it "reassuring" that the AFP insisted that its decision to keep the chain of command intact on Feb. 24 prevented the republic from disintegrating.

House Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin and Lakas Rep. Antonio Cuenco of Cebu criticized Senator Arroyo for saying that the President was now hostage to the military.

"Contrary to Joker's claim, the President is strongly assertive of her leadership," said Salapuddin.

'Old joke'

"Joker should show some respect to the AFP after it showed loyalty to their oath. They deserve more than a politician's tirade," said Cuenco.

"Palace hostage to the military? Of course not," said House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles. He said this had been a repeated refrain since the Marcos dictatorship. "It's an old joke."

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the military was propping up the Arroyo administration but that did not mean it was running the government.

"The Constitution says the military is the protector of the state and the people and they are subject to the calls of the President to suppress lawless violence, it's in the Constitution. Joker has forgotten to read the Constitution," said Gonzalez. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, TJ Burgonio, Armand N. Nocum, Norman Bordadora and Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Media warned again: No special treatment

From page A1

should "police their ranks and be watchful of interest groups" that could use them to destabilize the government.

Also yesterday, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez told reporters that he was investigating the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism for possible violation of the anti-wiretapping law by posting on its website the "Hello Garci" tapes purporting to show that fraud marked the May 2004 presidential election.

But in a statement, the PCIJ wondered how it could be in violation of the law when the same tapes had been played in Congress and even by Bunye in Malacañang.

It said it was "very disappointed" with Gonzalez's statements.

Fire them

Administration Sen. Ralph Recto called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to fire the officials who had advised her to clamp down on the media.

Recto said the administration should stop harassing the press, particularly the PCIJ, which, he said,. was "instrumental" in Ms Arroyo's "rise to power."

"Don't listen to them, Madame President. The enemies of press freedom are the real enemies of democracy. To a large extent, this government rode on the coattails of the [PCIJ] exposés on the alleged Erap mansions," the senator said, referring to the series of PCIJ reports on the lifestyles of former President Joseph Estrada and his mistresses.

Beneficiary

"Those in the opposition then were applauding the PCIJ's sleuthing. But now that they're in power, they would like to put in prison the very same people they once put on the pedestal," he said.

Estrada was toppled by the Edsa uprising in January 2001, paving the way for Ms Arroyo's assumption of the presidency.

Recto said it could not be denied that the administration was "a beneficiary of the PCIJ's intrepid reporting."

"But when the same journalistic standards that the PCIJ had adhered to through the years were used in scrutinizing the new government, those with newfound powers abhorred the exercise of a right they not so long ago extolled," he said.

Recto pointed out that "to his credit," Estrada would "only throw tantrums" every time the PCIJ came out with a new investigative piece.

"But this government wants to throw the entire PCIJ staff in jail," he said.

Citing sources, PCIJ executive director Sheila Coronel told the Senate on Tuesday that police had twice tried but failed to secure warrants to search the center's office in Quezon City, supposedly in connection with sedition charges being prepared against five of its members.

Clearance required

"If a search warrant is issued on the PCIJ, it will send a signal that it is open season for legitimate journalists," Coronel said.

Coronel's disclosure has prompted Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao to instruct his men to first clear all applications to search any media organization with his office.

"We don't want anybody applying for a warrant and then introducing themselves as policemen. We want to avoid incidents such as people saying they are cops [when they are not]," said Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, the PNP spokesperson.

No application

According to Coronel, sound engineer Jonathan Tiongco and three policemen asked Judge Alan Balot of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 76 to issue the search warrant but were turned down on March 10.

They tried again on March 13 but still failed to obtain a search warrant, she said.

But the PNP denied having applied for a warrant to search the PCIJ premises.

"There was also a person mentioned, a certain Tiongco. He is not in any way connected with the police," Pagdilao said.

He also said the PNP and the National Press Club had earlier agreed that the latter would be informed of any impending arrest of a member of the media.

Lawyer Wendell Ramiteri, clerk of court of Quezon City RTC Branch 76, denied that an application for a warrant to search the PCIJ office had been filed there.

PCIJ chief counsel Sandra Coronel confirmed this, saying she checked with the court on Tuesday and was told that no such application for a search warrant was filed on Monday.

Tiongco also denied involvement in the matter. He said in a text message: "*Wala akong* part *diyan* (I don't have a part there). I just accompanied a friend who was involved. I did not apply, and I can't because I'm a civilian. Police *lang ang pwede mag*-apply (Only the police can apply)."

Crackdown

Pagdilao said the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management had also checked and concluded that no police unit tried to secure a warrant to search the PCIJ office.

A check with the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group likewise yielded nothing, according to Pagdilao.

As part of the crackdown that resulted from Ms Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency on Feb. 24—ostensibly to thwart what she said was a conspiracy between communists and military officers to topple her administration—police raided the offices of The Daily Tribune.

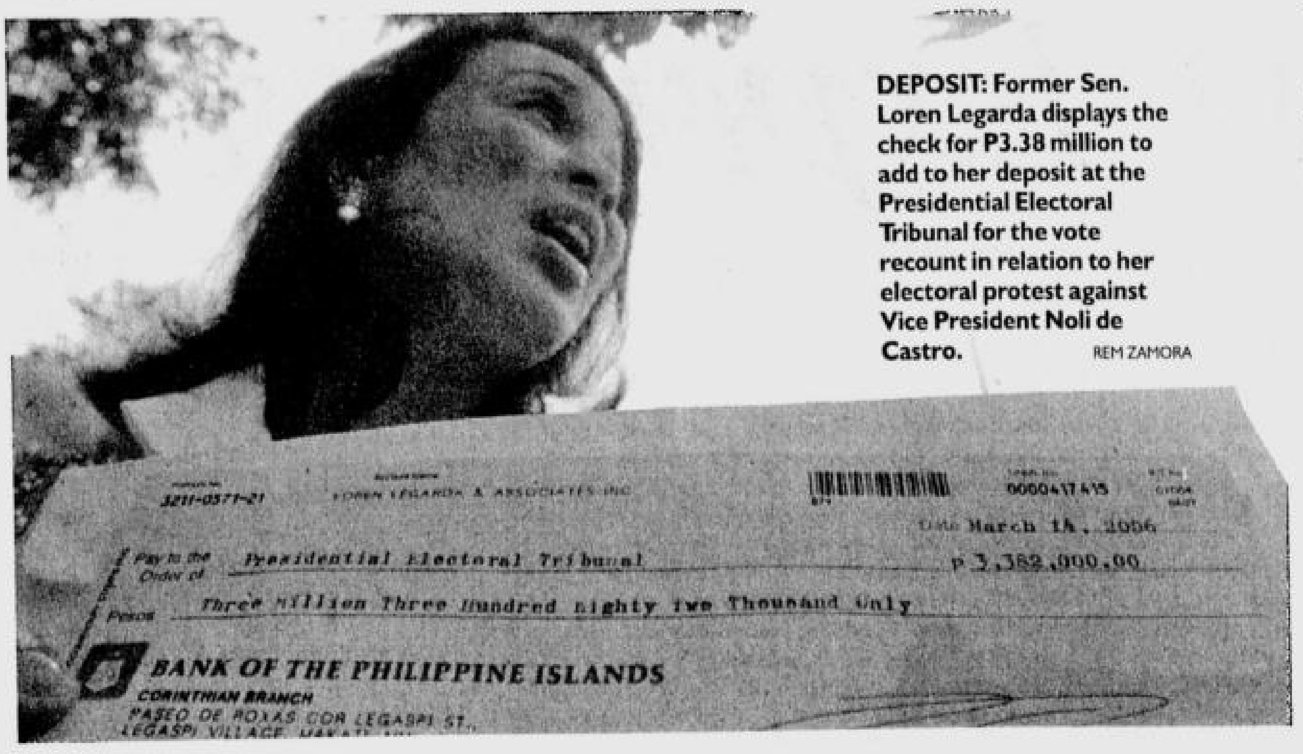
Soldiers were also deployed to two leading television stations, ostensibly to guard them from attacks by plotters.

The President lifted Proclamation No. 1017 a week later, but the raid on the newspaper office and other moves were criticized by various global press watchdogs, which accused her of muzzling the media.

In a statement issued on March 9, the Asian Journalists Association (AJA) declared "our solidarity with our fellow media practitioners in the Philippines" in the struggle to uphold democracy and press freedom.

The Seoul-based AJA called on "the authorities to stop intimidating journalists and media organizations."

"We urge President Macapagal-Arroyo to respect the professional right and duty of our fellow journalists to report political events without fear or favor," it said. *Reports from AFP, Philip C. Tubeza, and Luige A. del Puerto*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DEPOSIT: Former Sen. Loren Legarda displays the check for P3.38 million to add to her deposit at the Presidential Electoral Tribunal for the vote recount in relation to her electoral protest against Vice President Noli de Castro. REM ZAMORA

US Marines' arraignment set March 24

OLONGAPO CITY—The arraignment of four US Marines charged with raping a 22-year-old Filipino woman at the Subic Bay Freeport last year has been set for March 24.

In a one-page order issued yesterday, Judge Renato Dilag said both the complainant, a native of Zamboanga City, and the accused would be required to appear in his court for the arraignment starting at 9 a.m.

It will be the first time that the accused—Staff Sgt. Chad Brian Carpentier and Lance Corporals Daniel Smith, Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis—and the complainant will face each other since the alleged rape in a moving van at the Subic port on Nov. 1, 2005.

The soldiers are being held in the compound of the US Embassy in Manila.

In a letter dated Nov. 16, 2005, the Philippine government formally sought custody of the soldiers. But embassy officials, citing the the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippine and US governments, rejected the request.

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Loren shells out P3.4M more for recount

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER SEN. LOREN LEGARDA yesterday deposited P3.38 million more with the Supreme Court to fund the recount of votes in her electoral protest against Vice President Noli de Castro, bringing to P7.96 million the amount of money she has shelled out since the recount started last December.

At the same time, Legarda asked the court, which also acts as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, to speed up the revision of votes to resolve the crisis of leadership gripping the country.

Legarda made the additional deposit in compliance with an order from the tribunal for it to complete the recount of votes cast in at least 24,000 precincts in 44 provinces and cities which she has contested. Legarda claims she won in these precincts over De Castro, who has denied charges that he cheated in the May 2004 national elections.

At its present stage, the recount covers the provinces of Cebu, Pampanga, Maguindanao, and Lanao del Sur.

Legarda deposited P4.08 million as the recount got under way last December and made another deposit of P500,000 last week.

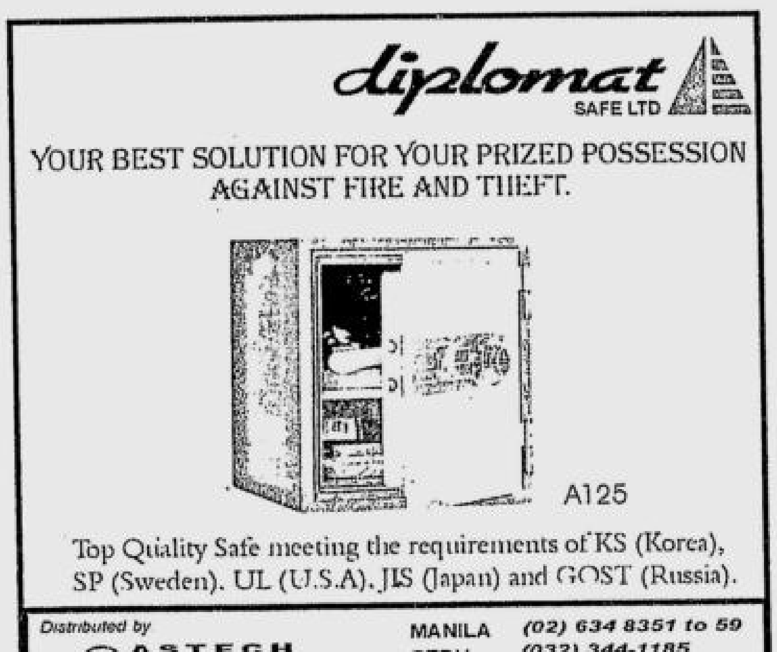
"I have put squarely behind this election protest my very limited resources so the Filipino people may take back what was stolen in the 2004 election," she said. "While the recount has not reached halfway, I believe that at this point I have exposed the truth to the public—that De Castro's questionable hold on the vice presidency was truly propped by electoral fraud."

In the Lanao del Sur retabulation, Legarda manifested to the PET the alleged spuriousness of the returns retrieved from Congress.

She pointed out that while she won in Lanao del Sur based on copies of the returns from the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel), the returns from Congress showed she had lost.

She said the discovery of allegedly forged returns was consistent with persistent reports that administration operatives had switched returns under the custody of the House of Representatives in January and February last year.

Aside from the "bogus returns" from Congress, the setting aside of 60 percent of the ballots from Cebu thus far examined due to questions of authenticity refutes claims by President Macapagal-Arroyo, De Castro and their lawyer, Romulo Macalintal, that the elections were clean and honest, Legarda said.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After 1017, GMA rating still very low

DISTRUST OF PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo remained at their lowest level in five years after she declared a state of emergency to thwart an alleged conspiracy by her political enemies to overthrow her, a survey showed yesterday.

Pollster Pulse Asia said 50 percent of 1,200 respondents said they disapproved of Ms Arroyo in the group's most recent survey, down from 52 percent in October last year, while 26 percent said they approved of the President, compared to 24 percent in October.

The survey, conducted between Feb. 18 and March 4, has a margin of error of 3 percentage points.

Ms Arroyo declared emergency rule on Feb. 24 after announcing a coup plot by disgruntled soldiers, communist rebels and civilian backers. During the weeklong emergency, her administration carried out a series of warrantless arrests targeting critics and left-wing lawmakers, banned rallies and raided an opposition newspaper.

"Despite the continuing efforts to unseat President Arroyo and the various controversies that still hound her administration as well as the Arroyo administration's policies and programs to win the support of the general public, local government officials, the military and police ... the president's overall performance and trust ratings in March 2006 are practically unchanged from the October 2005 levels," Pulse Asia said.

Reports by AP and Reuters

Deputy Ombudsman won't fade quietly

By Nelson F. Flores

THIS OVERALL DEPUTY OMbudsman will not fade quietly into retirement.

Claiming that the Office of the Ombudsman has lost its prestige and independence since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office, Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio Jr. has dared Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez to prove that she was not out to protect Ms Arroyo and her allies by immediately resolving charges involving them.

"We were never the same again after Ombudsman Aniano Desierto. The office had lost its aggressiveness and its public appeal. It has lost its rapport with the civil society. It should be spared from politics," he said.

Gervacio, who officially retires this week, is an appointee of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada.

The 68-year-old Gervacio said his 22 years of service with the Ombudsman was very fruitful. He said that it was his retirement wish that the office regain its old glory as an independent and politics-free antigraft prosecutorial body.

Desierto retired in 2002 and Ms Arroyo appointed lawyer Simeon Marcelo, who came into prominence as one of the prosecution lawyers in the impeachment trial of Estrada, to replace him.

Marcelo, citing health reasons, quit the post last year amid speculations that he resigned because of pressure from Malacañang on a graft case involving a Palace ally.

Ms Arroyo appointed Gutierrez to replace Marcelo late last year.

Gervacio said Gutierrez should prove that she is not under the Palace thumb by resolving the charges against the President, former justice secretary Hernando Perez, Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and former agriculture undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante.

President Arroyo has been accused of allegedly misusing the funds from the road users tax, the Overseas Worker Welfare Administration and and the fertilizer support program.

Perez has been accused of bribery and graft. Abalos has been linked to the allegedly anomalous Comelec computerization program while Bolante has been implicated in the multimillion-peso fertilizer funds scam.

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The Foreign Currency Differential Adjustment (FCDA) will **decrease** from **P0.37** per cubic meter to **P0.09** effective April 1, 2006 based on exchange rate of P51.82 per US Dollar.

FCDA is a tariff mechanism used by utility companies that is adjusted upwards to recover losses if the peso depreciates and downwards if the peso appreciates against other currencies. Manila Water has to continue paying for the foreign exchange denominated concession fees to the MWSS, as well as loans required for its service expansion and improvement.

The FCDA was approved by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System Regulatory Office in its Resolution No. 06-003-CA dated March 9, 2006 as confirmed by the MWSS Board Resolution No. 2006-067 dated March 9, 2006.

Manila Water Company, the East Zone concessionaire covers the following areas: Manila (San Andres and Sta. Ana only), Quezon City (east of San Juan River, West Avenue, EDSA, Congressional and Mindanao Ave., Districts of Tandang Sora, Pasong Tamo and Matandang Balara), Makati City (east of South Super Highway), Mandaluyong City, San Juan, Marikina City, Pasig City, Pateros, Taguig – all in Metro Manila; Rizal Province.

Nene to Joker: What blabbering?

By Philip C. Tubeza

SENATE MINORITY LEADER AQUILINO PImentel Jr. yesterday took exception to a colleague's comment that the opposition was just "blabbering" away while President Macapagal-Arroyo was allegedly kowtowing more and more to the military.

In a privilege speech, Pimentel said the minority was disputing Sen. Joker Arroyo's description of their criticism of the President as mere "blabbering," adding that the opposition had raised serious cases of anomalies against the administration.

"That is not blabbering. That is not idle talk. That is not spreading gossip. Our talk is anchored on fact," Pimentel said. "Indeed, we are talking, arguing, ranting against the Arroyo administration. But we cite specific cases of anomalies and wrongdoing of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo specifically to prove our point."

Pimentel was reacting to a statement by Arroyo that the President was hostage to the military, whom she was now consulting before every move while the opposition "just keeps on blabbering."

Pimentel said that the opposition had raised serious allegations, like the P728 million fertilizer fund scam and the controversial North Rail Project and strongly protested her proclamation of a state of national emergency, among other things.

"And when we raise the specter of (the President's) demented assertion that she is the state, that is not blabbering in any manner," he said.

Corrections

IN THE FEB. 11 ISSUE, an Entertainment story on Page A2-2—"Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner as lovers"—misstated Gardner's home state. The actress was born and raised in North Carolina—not Texas.

* * *

IN THE MARCH 9 ISSUE, a front-page story—"LPG shows poverty now wears a woman's face"—misstated the name of the group that conducted the study regarding LPG and women. The study was conducted by the Center for Women's Resources (CWR)—not the Center for Women's Studies (CWS). The story also misstated the name of CWR's executive director. The CWR executive director is Mary Joan Guan—not Mary Jane Guan.

* * *

IN THE MARCH 10 ISSUE, a front-page story—"'Fantastic' role model, trailblazer, buried today"—erroneously reported that Estefania Aldaba-Lim was the first female Cabinet member. According to the National Historical Institute, Asuncion Arriola-Perez headed the Social Welfare Administration during President Elpidio Quirino's term, earlier than Aldaba-Lim's stint which was from 1971 to 1977. Arriola-Perez's position carried a Cabinet rank.

* * *

IN THE MARCH 14 ISSUE, a story on Page A13—"Judge to resume Subic rape case hearing"—misstated that in the years when the United States operated the Subic and Clark military bases, US military personnel charged with offenses were not tried by Philippine courts. American offenders at that time were not just court-martialed. Some were even sentenced to prison terms by local courts, like American sailor Michael Carpaneto, who was sentenced to a two-month prison term for hitting two Filipino journalists in April 1989.

* * *

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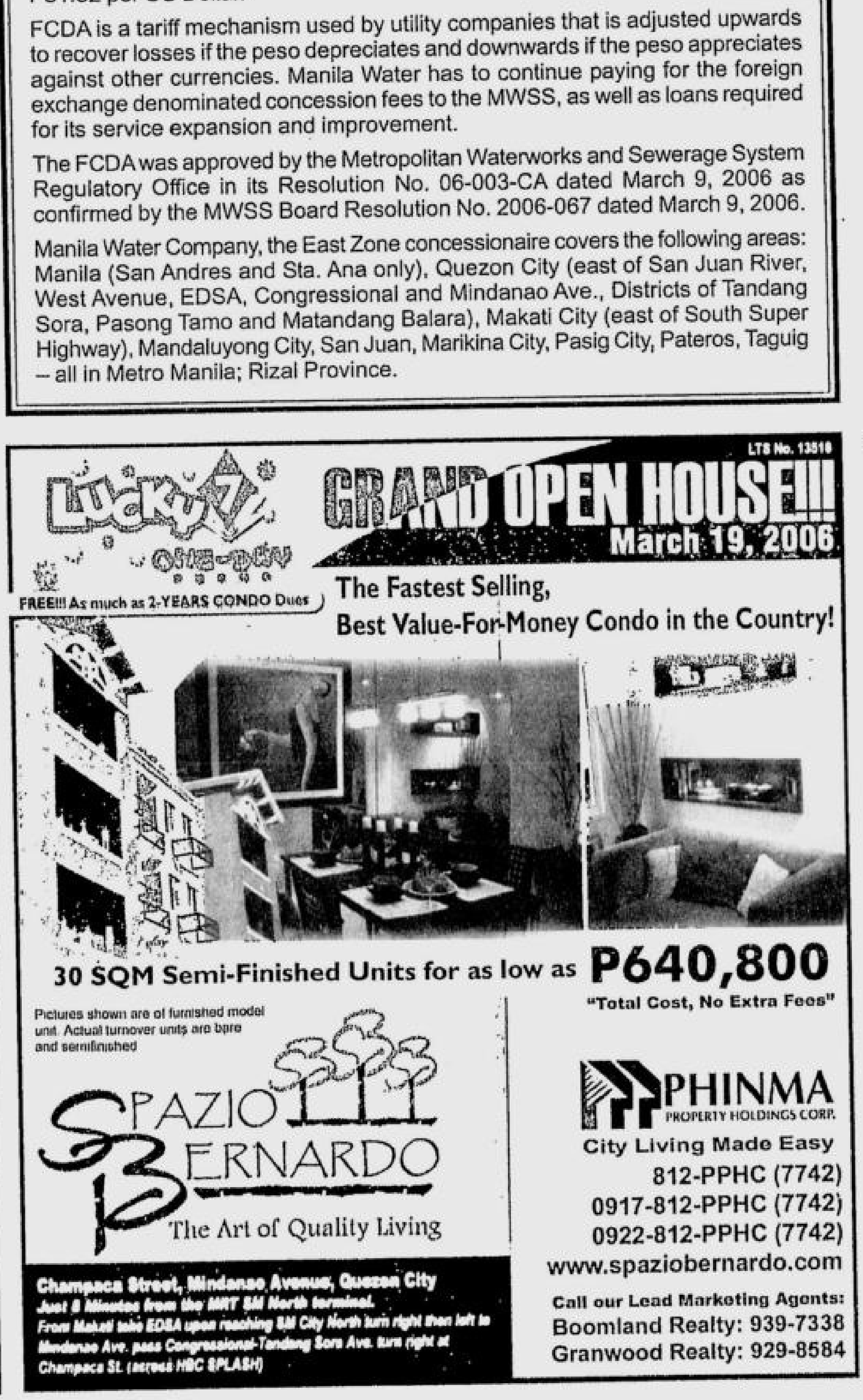
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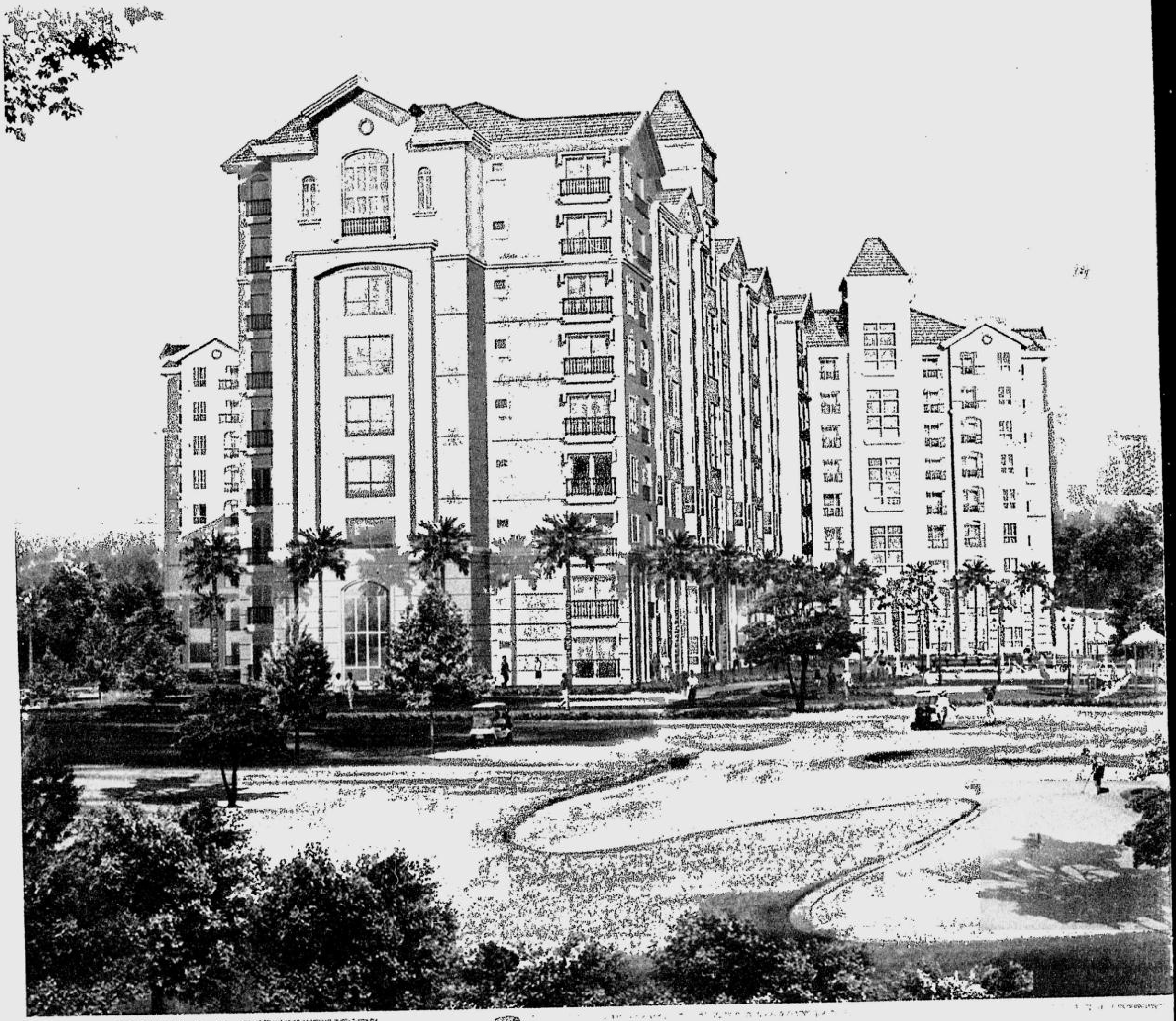

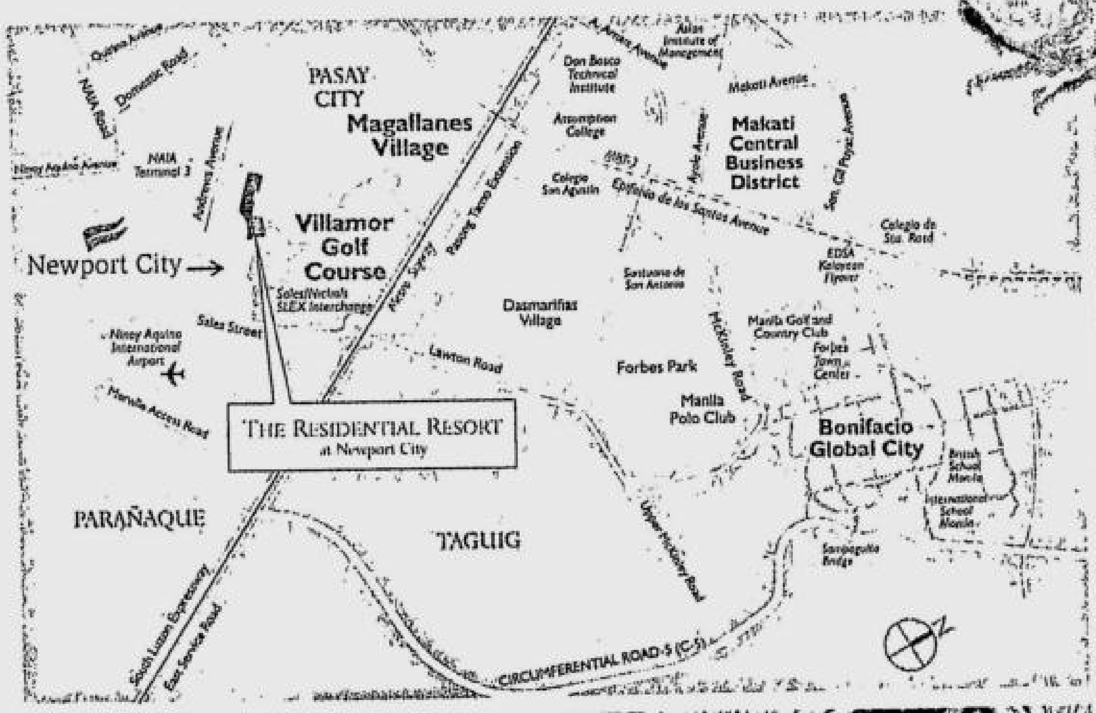
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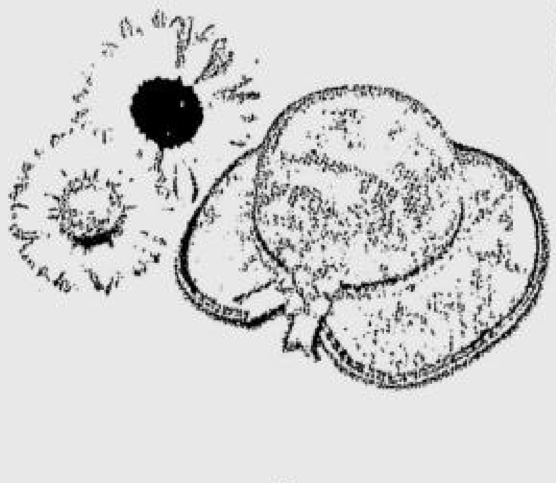

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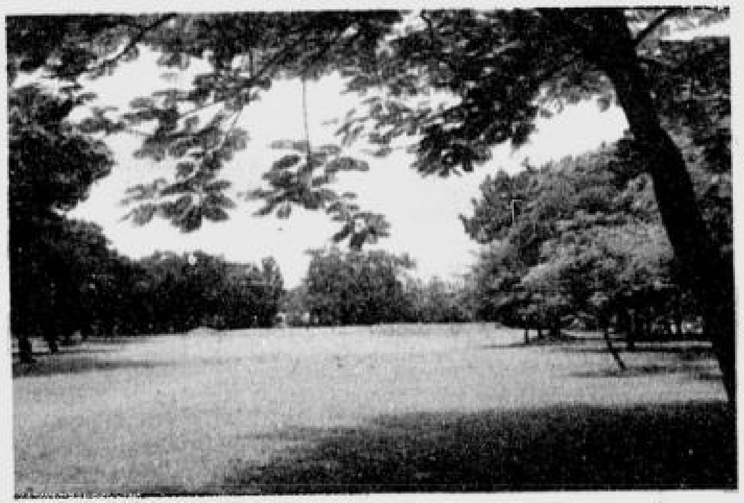

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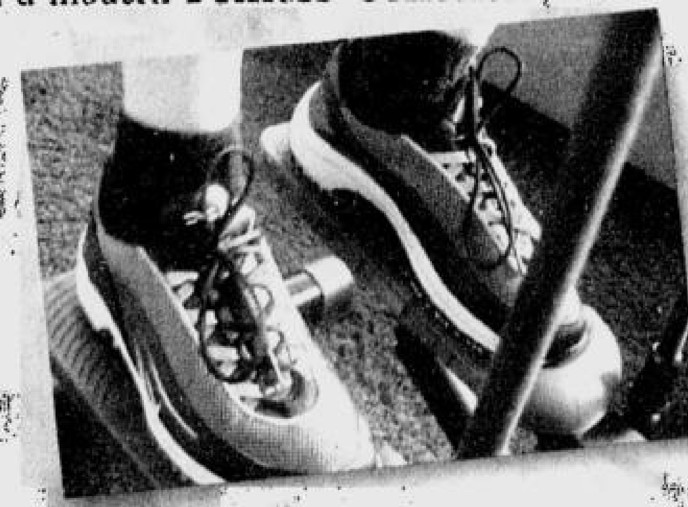

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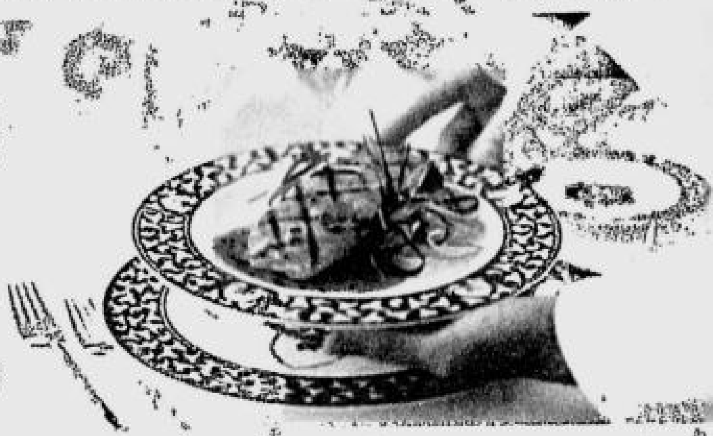

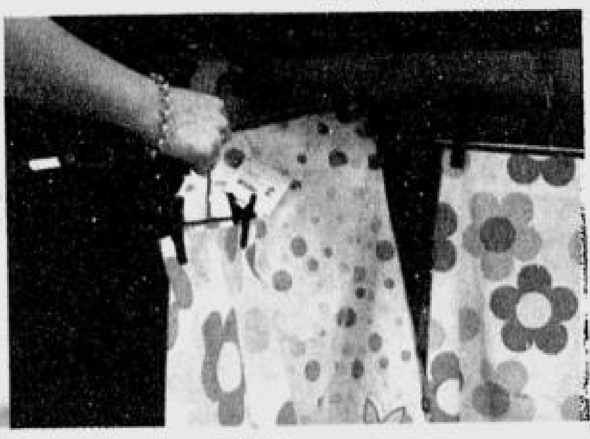

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OPINION

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Subversion

EDITORIAL

A VIGIL WAS HELD IN THE OFFICES OF THE NAtional Union of Journalists of the Philippines last Tuesday. Earlier that day, a TV crew from GMA-7 network had arrived, after their news desk was tipped off that soldiers would raid the premises of the journalists' advocacy group. Some NUJP members remained on the premises until 11 p.m. that night, just in case. Mercifully, the raid never came. A raid was also rumored to be in the works, this time at the offices of Newsbreak Magazine. That didn't take place, either.

The former was based on a credible source; the latter, just a sign of how jittery the situation has gotten, particularly since Newsbreak is coming out with photographs showing the alleged doctoring of election documents.

A search warrant that would have allowed government agents to go through the offices of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism also wasn't produced that Tuesday—though not for lack of trying. Quezon City policemen, according to the PCIJ, went to two different judges and were refused each time. While surprisingly no records exist to show such requests were made, one of the PCIJ's lawyers (the sister of PCIJ head Sheila Coronel) saw policemen at one judge's sala in the company of a citizen who has filed cases against the PCIJ in the past (only to be rebuffed by the Supreme Court).

As the saying goes, there is more than one way to skin a cat. President Macapagal-Arroyo made it explicit in her proclamation of a state of national emergency that she considered media as a threat to her stay in office. Though she has nominally put an end to her state of emergency and its accompanying orders, she has also called for "one comprehensive, continuing sweep" against her enemies or, as she loftily calls them, "the enemies of the state." The sweep is not necessarily a frontal assault, but an effort aimed at achieving through other means what the law forbids: the stifling not only of dissent but of criticism. The administration policy, in a word, is subversion.

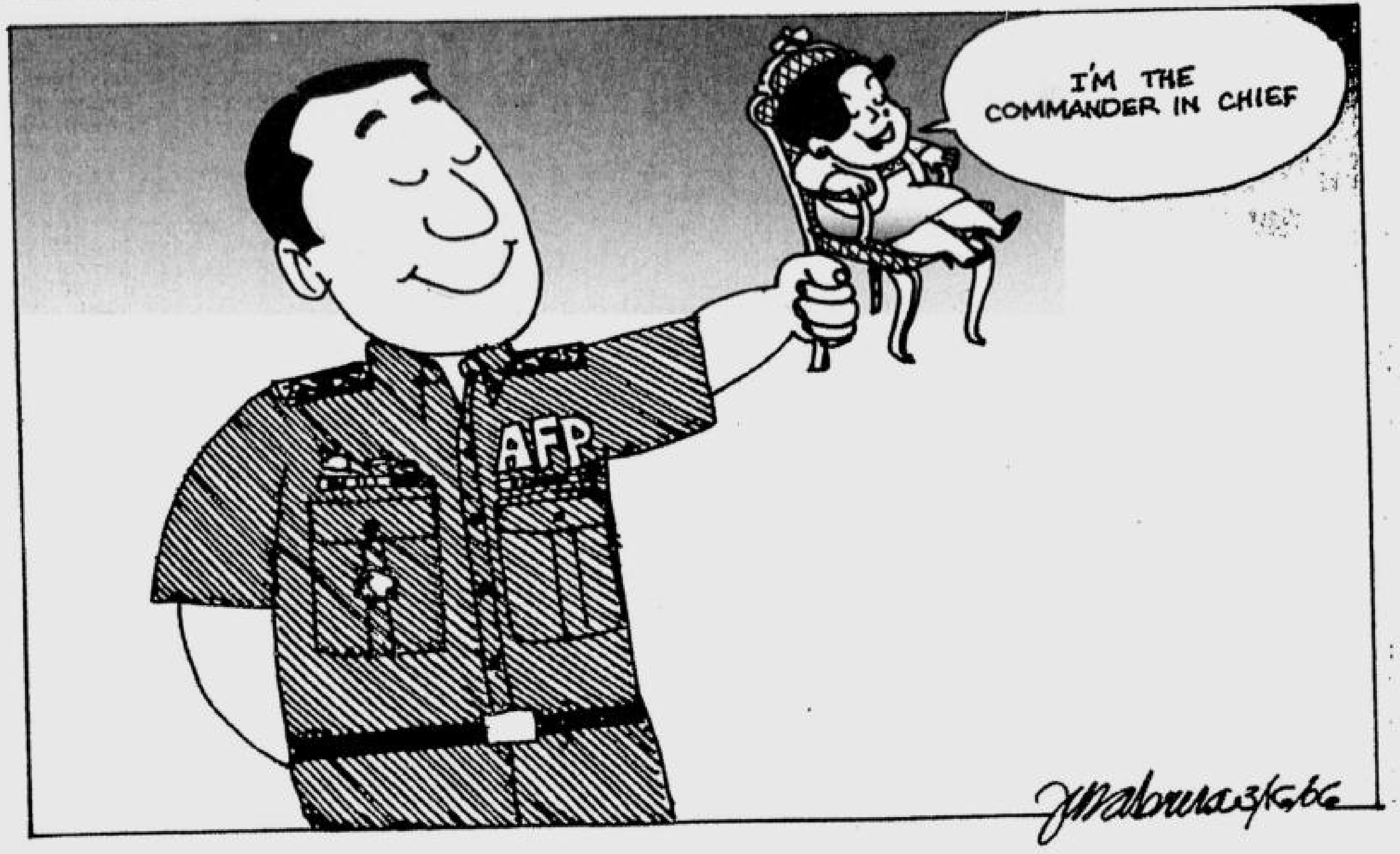
There is no other word which properly defines what the administration has set out to do to the media that will not unquestioningly sing its praises. There is no other way to describe what the President's civilian, police and military officials are doing: jabbing, feinting, stabbing, probing to see who will fold simply by being at the receiving end of words and outlandish accusations, or who will stand firm and perhaps require more bare-knuckled measures.

It is fair enough—indeed, it is to be expected and demanded—that media be held accountable for what they publish and broadcast. Not only officials, but also the public, are expected to assert their rights and defend their honor if aggrieved or unjustly maligned. It is proper to ask media to make sure their mechanisms for accountability and action function. It is every citizen's right to resort to the courts for relief, if necessary.

The subversion that is taking place, however, aims at thought control. To force journalists to fret over the integrity of their right to privacy, their freedom of communication, their freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, is to force them into a situation that no citizen of the country, regardless of profession, should have to endure. The constant state of disquiet and even alarm resulting from this is not only a disservice to an independent profession, it is an attack on the broader liberties that are guaranteed as rights, not privileges, by the Constitution.

Under what circumstances would a raid on the premises of a journalists' association be justified? And since when does a democratic government's police ask the courts for a warrant to search the offices of journalists for materials that are "subversive," considering how subversion can be so very broadly interpreted? To do their jobs, journalists must talk to many people, and read all sorts of things. Are they to be subjected to persecution because of their reading and interview choices? By any definition this is prior restraint.

Yet the Constitution says there shall be no prior restraint on media. But so much for the Constitution. The real guide of the administration is its list—the trademark fetish of every totalitarian regime waiting to be born. Justice Secretary Gonzalez says the list includes five PCIJ journalists being watched. For what? For sedition, he says. And all along we thought the only way to watch a writer was to read what he wrote.


I'M THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
AFP

When the jokes stop

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

FILIPINOS JOKE ABOUT EVERYTHING, EVEN our flaws, like short attention spans and truncated memories.

"Political jokes are a way of coping .... and reflect a certain level of collective anxiety about public affairs," Steven Lukes of Balliol College, Oxford and Itzhak Galnoor of Hebrew University assert in their book: "No Laughing Matter."

"In a society where the level of political joking is usually high, it may be time to worry when the joking stops," they say.

But wisecracks in an open society and in a dictatorship differ. Anyone can text a joke about Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Juan Ponce Enrile, Jinggoy Estrada and others. But few remember that a wisecrack against Marcos and his "Rolex 12" officers courted a beating, detention—or both.

We hurt so much, then we laughed. Could coup-titillated generals learn something from the jokes whispered then?

Under Proclamation 1081, journalists like Chino Roces, Amando Doronila and Napoleon Rama were arrested at dawn. This led to the "Happiness Is" joke: Happiness is when soldiers bang your doors at 2 a.m., you open, and tell them: "Wrong address. The person you're looking for lives next door."

Then, there was the security guard who told the late Business Day publisher Raul Locsin: "Sir, *may problema tayo as aso* (Sir, we have a problem with the dog)."

"Then feed him," Locsin snapped.

"Sir," the guard replied: "'*Yung aso ay* arrest-and-seizure-order."

The late Gen. Fabian Ver arrested a man for anti-Marcos jokes. The detainee gazed at Marcos' plush room with admiration. "Mmmmm," he said. "You don't live too badly."

"Well, what of it?" Marcos snapped. "After 25 years of the 'New Society,' everybody will live like this."

"Aha!" the prisoner said. "A new joke."

Recall the question that Ver asked 57 colonels angling for a general's star: "Colonel, how much is two plus two?" All 57 answered: "four." All were told: "Wrong." Finally, the 58th interviewee—a major—enters. "Major, how much is two plus two?" asked Ver. "Two for you, sir and two for me," he replied. "Correct, colonel. Now, the President will see you."

Marcos asked the same question: "How much is two plus two?"

The brand new colonel replied: "Simple, Mr. President. Two plus two equals four—and all for you, sir."

"Raise your right hand, general," Marcos ordered.

We were attending a Tagaytay seminar on economic indicators, shortly after our Camp Crame detention. The amiable Gen. J. Campos presided. Martial law was new and people were cautious. Still, I couldn't resist cracking this joke:

A crowded bus bound for Baguio enters the North Expressway from Quezon City. A passenger taps another and politely asks: "Are you in the Army?" The man says no. In Hagonoy, Bulacan, the former asks another question: "You're in the Navy then?" Same answer, no. In Angeles, Pampanga, another question: "Then you're with the Marines?" No, the second man replies. Nearing Tarlac, the first man asks: "You're with the Air Force?" "No," was once more the emphatic reply. "In that case, get off my bloody foot," he explodes.

As the academics broke out in uncertain laughter, I added: "Be careful, my wife cautioned when I drove over. So, general, sir, I was just kidding."

The later years saw another joke. Four people were arrested for beating a military officer. At the police station, the young pretty lady stated the officer tried to mash her. She was released. The other two were the lady's father and brother. They, too, were released. The remaining prisoner, a young student, had by then turned pale. "Is that the only reason?" he wailed. "I thought there had been a change in the regime."

Today's reports say the plotters claim they'd "rescue the people." Two mothers were chatting.

First mother: "We are lucky."

Second mother: "Are you crazy?"

First mother: "They are coming as our rescuers. Think what they'd have done if they came as enemies."

Depending on who told it, it was either Imelda or a Filipino general in the joke on visiting a corrupt Asian general's penthouse.

"Let's be frank," he whispers into the ear of his host." "I know your Army salary. So, how can you afford all this?" he asks, pointing to the luxurious appointments.

The host leads the general to the terrace and, pointing to the horizon, asks: "Do you see those two mountains?" He nods. "Do you see that bridge between them?" He nods again. "Twenty percent," is the reply.

In a courtesy return visit, the Filipino is host at his residence. "Let's be frank," the visitor whispers into the ear of his host. "Given your salary, how can you afford all this?" At the terrace, the general points to the horizon and asks: "See those two mountains?" The man nods. "Do you see that bridge between them?" The puzzled man protests: "But there's no bridge!" And the reply is: "One hundred percent."

* * *

E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Cry freedom

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THINKING ABOUT IT THESE PAST DAYS HAS made me realize how entirely appropriate the name of our concert today is—"Concert for Freedom." I did say last Monday that freedom isn't just the air music—and art generally—breathes, it is what it is. Freedom is its instinct, freedom is its nature.

None of that is to say that great music, or art, can be produced only in conditions of benign or liberal rule. Ironically, some of the greatest art has been produced under conditions of war and repression. But that is not to say either that war and repression are fertile soil for art. The seeming exception in fact proves the rule. Art flourished in those times in reaction to tyranny, in protest of tyranny, as a struggle to push back tyranny through the battering ram of resistance.

Some of the triumphant Greek tragedies were not produced in times of peace and prosperity, they were produced in times of war and want, such as the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta. And one of the most dazzling testimonies to the idiocy of war and bigotry and the transcendence of the human spirit was a diary written by a girl barely past her adolescence, recording her dreams and loves, fears and passions, while hiding in an attic in a house in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam. She was of course Anne Frank, and her diary has become the fiercest indictment of intolerance there is.

Music-wise, the popular music of the second half of the 20th century owes almost entirely to repression of an exceptionally cruel kind. Rock-and-roll, rock, jazz, and rhythm and blues all came from the same source, which was the music produced in the Mississippi Delta by slaves or former slaves, the distinction not often being very clear even after the formal emancipation of the Negroes. Music now called the Blues.

Alan Lomax's book, "The Land Where the Blues Began," tells of the ferocity of the bigotry the Negroes were subjected to long after the end of the Civil War, particularly in the American South. They weren't just treated as second-class citizens, they were treated like dogs, to be whipped and kicked at their slightest provocation. The institutions of society all conspired to make them invisible and mute. They were there, but they could not be seen or heard. The Negroes fought back spontaneously with music, though they were never aware at first they were fighting back. The Blues were an instinctive cry of pain that issued from the bowels of the Delta, which took explosive and structured form in the communal ululations of choir and congregation alike in Sunday service. As Lomax says, you cannot understand the power of gospel music until you hear one in the original place it was sung, in church. He did, for the first time in the 1930s, and the hair in his body stood on end.

That's where modern popular music comes from, the Blues. Elvis Presley, the poor boy from Tupelo, Mississippi, merely took the sounds and rhythms he heard around him as a child and hurled them back at the world. The result was rock-and-roll, the genre that came to dominate popular music in the latter half of the 20th century. And counting. Of course with its being discovered by the teenyboppers of the 1950s and its dangerous or subversive edge sandpapered by the mainstream white community it was thrust into, there's very little of it today to suggest its grief-stricken origins. Or how it began, as a cry to be seen and heard, to feel through numb bodies, to experience being human.

Music is the loudest whisper there is, whether it's sobbing out lost love or lost liberty. There's a purity to it that arrests you, that seizes you where you stand, and compels you to listen.

I remember some years ago someone writing to complain that the American public tended to believe popular musicians more than public officials. He wondered why that was so when many popular musicians were not even high school graduates. His premise at least was borne out by several recent polls that said the public distrusted politicians most and trusted teachers and artists most. The first, the surveys said, were most apt to lie, the second the most apt to tell the truth.

Well, the truth that musicians and artists tell, which is why they are believed even without a high school diploma, goes beyond the truth of events to the truth about the human plight. When the human condition is agony and pain, music lets out a yelp that echoes across the length and breadth of heaven and earth and shatters the ramparts of oppression. That is what we will issue today from the pit of the Sunken Garden in the University of the Philippines—a cry of pain that, like Joshua's trumpets, will break down the walls of dictatorship.

We shall overcome.

* * *

The final list of performers tonight in order of appearance is: Chin Chin Gutierrez, Crazy as Pinoy, Affinity, Isha, Noli Aurillo, Carol and Sammy (of Pinikpikan), Susan Fernandez, Noel Cabangon, True Faith, Reggae Mistress, The Jerks, Session Road, Brownman Revival, Up Dharma Down, Giniling Festival, Paramita, Grasspipe, Radioactive Sago, Twisted Halo, Bobby Balingit/Juan Isip, Cynthia Alexander, Willie Nepomuceno, Leah Navarro, Dong Abay and Popoy Diokno, Color It Red with Tots Tolentino, Pinwheel, Bridge, Hemp Republic, Coffeebreak Island, Agaw Agimat, Tropical Depression, Datu's Tribe, Village Idiots, Lost in the Veins.

I thank all of them from the bottom of my heart. To repeat, the concert is **absolutely free**. It is open to everyone whatever their creed, (preferred) gender, age and musical taste. It starts at 5:30 p.m. We start on time to allow some of the artists to hie off to their paying gigs afterward. I'm hoping for a star-filled night sky to go with our star-filled twilight cry. But just to be sure, bring umbrellas.

Cry struggle. Cry freedom. Cry fun.

Cost of destabilization

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IF THE PEOPLE HAVE REFUSED TO JOIN THE political opposition as it hammers at the "illegitimacy" of the Arroyo administration, the reason may be gleaned from the recent tiff between Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Jamby Madrigal. Enrile claims that he overheard Madrigal talking at the height of the 2004 campaign to someone over the phone and expressing her willingness to pay any amount so long as she lands among the top five winners. After the elections, there was a lot of talk about how the fierce race for the "Magic 12" senators had boiled down to paying the right price. Madrigal was among those rumored to have allegedly bought her victory. Thus, to many people, the allegation about GMA cheating was no big deal. *"Lahat naman sila nandaya."*

* * *

My radio partner, executive director Cecile Guidote-Alvarez of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, flew to Lisbon, Portugal, last March 4 to attend the World Arts Education Congress. The week-long high-level conference was attended by over 1,000 delegates from around the world, including some prominent names in education, culture and the arts, led by Unesco Director General Koichiro Matsuura and Portugal's President Anibal Antonio Cavaco Silva. Cecile's artists, led by director and playwright Frank Rivera and blind pianist-singer Rico del Rosario, made a big impact on the delegates from over 100 nations, who are expected to fly to Manila for the 31st International Theater Institute Conference from May 22 to 28 this year. It will be a big honor for RP, as it will be the first time this biennial event, which will be attended by various Nobel laureates, will be held in Southeast Asia. Cecile Alvarez worked so hard for this honor in Paris two years ago.

The coup attempt in Manila, however, had caused the delegates in Lisbon enormous worry. Cecile had to spend a lot of effort to assure them that the situation was stable. That's how much destabilization hurts our country.

* * *

While taipans hog the headlines, the 655,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the country account for 99 percent of all businesses here, providing 69 percent of employment and contributing 32 percent to the economy. This explains why the government has been giving them extra attention. In November last year, then Land Bank president Margarito Teves reported that the bank's total outstanding loans to micro-enterprises and SMEs have grown steadily over the past five years. As of September, these loans reached P18 billion, a 7 percent increase from the P16.9 billion loans for the same period in 2004, with P16.2 billion going to SMEs.

* * *

Another boon to SMEs was the recent inauguration of the Business Technology Center at the Department of Trade's Regional Operations Group Office in Makati. The center was set up as a "one-stop shop" to help SMEs gain access to business expertise and technology that would help them modernize their operations and make them more efficient and globally competitive. It will operate as a close partnership between government and the private sector, which will make facilities and expertise available. As explained by Trade Undersecretary Carissa Cruz, the government's participation involves the DTI, with its five-point action strategy for job generation and raising incomes, and the Commission on Information and Communication Technology (CICT), chaired by Virgilio L. Peña, whose mission is to promote and develop strategic ICT systems and reliable communication facilities and services. The private sector is represented by Intel, Microsoft and PLDT.

As Cruz and Peña explained, the center will take the SMEs from step one, if necessary, i.e., away from the *lista-lista* system, to the use of IT technology for profit, through skills-building seminars. They will learn how to use PCs and such productivity tools as the e-mail, Internet and broadband technology, and how to automate their inventory and accounting management. The learning sessions, which can accommodate 10 persons each, are for free. They are held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 to 4 p.m. Interested parties can call 896-3172.

* * *

Paging Air Transport Office area manager Allan Java. My sister-in-law, interior designer Sonia Santiago-Olivares, was in Iloilo City recently with a colleague, Jose Ma. Hubilla, to visit the University of San Agustin as a requirement of the Philippine Regulatory Commission (PRC). Hubilla chairs the PRC board of examiners in interior design, with Sonia and interior designer Tony Adriano as members. When she got to Manila, Sonia called me up to express dismay over the Iloilo airport ladies' room. The cubicle for the disabled was tied up with a straw string, another cubicle had no door, and the only functioning one was dirty. One had to fetch water with a dirty can. By contrast, she found the Bacolod airport's ladies' room well-maintained.

* * *

Sonia said the interior designers are willing to help design for free a decent restroom for the Iloilo airport. But she also noted signs all over the Iloilo terminal that said the air-conditioners were donated by Senate President Franklin Drilon. Did Drilon spend his personal funds for them? she queried. If he spent his CDF, she said, those signs should be removed.

I myself noted the horrible condition of the airport's ladies' room when I went to Antique via Iloilo to deliver a talk on Evelio Javier's 20th death anniversary last Feb. 11. One reason may be that a new airport is being built in Sta. Barbara. But this is no excuse for the current deplorable condition, especially since I learned that President Macapagal-Arroyo recently met with hotel and tourism leaders in Iloilo on her desire to fully develop the tourism potential of Panay Island to complement Boracay. I wish GMA saw that ladies' room.

PCIJ under siege

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

AT THE SENATE HEARING LAST TUESDAY, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) executive director Sheila Coronel and The Daily Tribune editor Ninez Cacho-Olivarez gave testimonies on the harassment and curtailment of media freedom that media organizations have experienced in the past days.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, woefully paraphrasing Benjamin Franklin, said, "Those who want to destroy the freedom of nations will have to start with the freedom of the press."

Clashing with the generals during the martial law years wasn't so bad after all, I told Sheila and she agreed. At least we knew the enemy then, we knew their names and their faces. But tangling now with those who operate in the shadows is something else. You have to watch your back.

So many media practitioners have died in the hands of such elements in the past couple of years. The recent government attempts to threaten and harass the media serve to embolden those with shady intentions.

Excerpts from Sheila's opening statement at the Senate illustrate this.

"(Last Monday afternoon), three members of the Central Police District, accompanied by sound engineer Jonathan Tiongco, asked a Quezon City judge to issue a warrant that will allow the police to search the office of the PCIJ, apparently in connection with a charge of inciting to sedition.

"The PCIJ received confirmation of the application from well-placed sources in the Quezon City Regional Trial Court (RTC) and the Quezon City Police. Court and police sources say that an earlier application for a search warrant was turned down last Friday by another Quezon City judge. This apparently prompted the police and Tiongco to apply today for a search warrant with another judge, Alan Balot of RTC Branch 76.

"Alerted by the PCIJ, journalists from various media organizations waited outside Balot's office while the hearing for the search warrant, which began at about 4:30 p.m., lasted past office closing hours… The judge emerged from his office at about 5:30 p.m., but refused to talk to reporters. Interviewed by GMA-7 reporter Sandra Aguinaldo, Tiongco only said that the hearing had been cancelled. The clerk of court, meanwhile, told Aguinaldo that there was no hearing, only an application for a search warrant…

"The PCIJ was unable to get a copy of the charge sheet, but its lawyers believe that the case is linked to the one filed by Tiongco against the PCIJ late last year. In that case, filed before the Department of Justice, Tiongco said that the PCIJ should be charged with 'inciting to sedition' for posting on (its) blog the 'Hello, Garci' recording containing the allegedly wiretapped conversations between former elections commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and several officials, including possibly President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"In that petition, which was ignored by the justice department, Tiongco alleged that the posting of the audio recordings led the opposition to call for the President's resignation and impeachment and encouraged civil society groups to hold rallies against the President.

"Since the last quarter of 2005, Tiongco and his wife Rona have filed two libel cases against the PCIJ for publishing on (the PCIJ) blog extracts of a police dossier that lists a string of criminal cases filed against him. Rona Tiongco has also sued the PCIJ for violation of her right to privacy. In addition, Jonathan Tiongco has filed a falsification charge against the Center. He also asked, but failed, to get the Supreme Court to issue an injunction against the posting of the 'Hello, Garci' recording on the PCIJ blog. Tiongco has also sued ABS-CBN for libel, wiretapping and falsification.

"On Nov. 4, Quezon City Judge Ralph S. Lee issued a 20-day temporary restraining order on the PCIJ blog on the request of Rona Tiongco, who said that the Aug. 12, 2005 post on her husband violated her privacy and that of her children. Mrs. Tiongco, however, was never mentioned by name in that post.

"Jonathan Tiongco has been linked to Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor, who presented the sound engineer in a press conference last Aug. 12, in a bid to question the authenticity of the 'Hello, Garci' recording. In a telephone interview with the PCIJ (last Monday), Defensor denied any knowledge of the search warrant against the PCIJ.

"'There are certain media personalities against whom cases of inciting to sedition will be filed,' he said, but 'PCIJ is not one of them.' He said that the only relationship he had with Tiongco was that press conference last year. 'I want this clear, we're not together politically,' he said. 'He is more aligned with the opposition. He even filed cases against (former police chief Hermogenes) Ebdane and (former Cabinet secretary and chief of staff Angelo) Reyes.'

"When asked whether an inciting to sedition charge ought to be filed against the PCIJ for posting the wiretapped recordings, Defensor said, 'I was the one who said it's no use stopping the release of the Garci tape.'

"In an Oct. 11, 2005 ruling, the Supreme Court threw out Tiongco's petition demanding that the PCIJ take down the 'Hello, Garci' recording from (its) blog. The high tribunal asserted that the constitutional right to free expression was paramount. 'Free expression is guaranteed by the Constitution,' the Supreme Court said. 'Any deviation from this rule through judicial restraint can only be had after a proper trial of facts.'

"The Supreme Court also described Tiongco's petition as 'barely comprehensible' and 'bereft of merit.'"

When the search warrant is served (today?) and the search is carried out, I will be present as a member of the PCIJ board. But what is it that the searchers hope to find?

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Filipino first

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

RASHEED ABOU-ALSAMH, MY EDITOR IN THE Arab News, who also writes a column ("Manila Moods") for INQ7.net, correctly mentioned in one of his recent columns, that I "despised [Rep. Crispin] Beltran for having supported the bloody Chinese repression of the Tiananmen Square protests." However, if I despise anything more than the act of publicly defending repression, it's what Beltran and five other members of the House of Representatives are being subjected to, now—political repression.

Voltaire said he would defend the right of people he disagreed with to say what they wanted—to the death. What a person believes, and thinks, can never be a crime: otherwise our prisons would be filled with novelists and essayists who express the darkest, the harshest and, often, the bloodiest, thoughts concerning our society. Rizal was thrown into prison for revealing what he believed to be the country's "social cancer."

You cannot imprison someone for believing that Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao have the answers to everything, just as you cannot lock someone up for asserting that the Bible or the Koran contains the solution to all of life's—and society's—problems. To do so—presuming one disagrees with Communists or Catholics or Muslims—is to turn the believer into an instant martyr, the highest calling for any person of faith or convictions. It would be like a scientist calling for the imprisonment of a monk, which would be just as condemnable as the clergy of old who called for certain scientists to be suppressed by the Church.

Beltran, Lisa Maza, Satur Ocampo, Joel Virador, Teodoro Casiño and Rafael Mariano represent a constituency that not only clearly exists, but is also entitled to representation. They adhere to a political orientation that has every right to be expressed and can claim a particular right to be heard, considering how they claim to represent the downtrodden and dispossessed. You may believe that they are unfairly asserting political rights while their comrades continue to wage an active war against the state that they (Beltran et al.) are sworn to uphold. They can just as easily counter that it is unfair to judge them while ignoring the widespread poverty and social conditions that lead people to revolt against authority, in the first place.

But the facts are these: they are elected—and in a more legitimate and unquestionable manner than, say, the President. They represent a constituency which, like any constituency, deserves representation. What they believe, or read, or espouse, is not criminal, according to our present laws; and that the laws of the land exist just as much for their protection as they do for the protection of those who disagree with them.

To say a Marxist deserves inferior treatment under our laws; to rationalize the liquidation of the organizers and leaders of dissident groups on the basis of their political beliefs—never mind if they aren't even actively fighting in the field; to excuse the stripping away of their rights under the Constitution and the laws, on the assumption they wouldn't respect either once they gain power—all these serve to prove the rightness of their cause and not the cause of those who have a different vision for our country and society.

Does it offend to see them demanding that the law be scrupulously applied, that they be accorded the fullest due process? It should offend more that anyone in a democratic republic would consider giving them anything less under our present system. Does it matter that those who will not denounce armed revolution—as a means for achieving change—have the temerity to insist that a Republic, based on the peaceful exercise of dissent and disobedience to tyranny, refrain from resorting to the methods of a dictatorship, which both socialists and democrats have fought against, in their own ways? Of course not. It doesn't matter.

It is our common obligation to give them that which we might suspect them of wanting to deny us, should they ever acquire absolute power. Indeed, to give them the full benefit of the protections guaranteed by a liberal democratic order, each and every time, is the surest guarantee our democracy will survive and flourish.

We can always agree to disagree on politics, on ideology, on dogma. But we should never disagree on according each other the right to think what we think, write what we want to write, express what we want to express, and most of all, engage each other in debate. The one who pulls out a gun or a truncheon to settle a discussion loses that discussion: because then, the only debate left is to what extent one will cooperate with one's jailer. It's not much of a debate—or a life one should wish on anyone. Particularly in a society which has jails filled with people denied justice.

I am developing a kind of impatience, too, with those carping on the presence of the usual, notorious suspects at protests against the President, as an alibi for staying uninvolved. It's not as if these people are overflowing with love and admiration for the President; more often than not, their opinion of God's gift to our country is pretty low.

Is there a discomfort to be felt when, in a meeting supposedly in defense of good things, one sees people whom they perceive to be not "good people"? Of course. However, it is more uncomfortable to realize that the result of that discomfort would be the perpetuation of a leadership which a broad consensus sees unfit to retain leadership.

What is the price of abandoning the field to those whom one dislikes as much as the present government? The inevitability of those already hungry, already devoid of hope, already filled with hatred for a system that can't feed, clothe and educate them, to reach for a weapon and head for the hills.

Chipmunk

YOUNG BLOOD

Katie Sy

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I'M WRITING THIS WHILE WAITING FOR YET ANOTHER take-out meal for my pseudo-boyfriend and me. "Boyfriend" because he fits the job description; "pseudo" because he is married. We never eat out lest we get busted. You see, this pseudo-boyfriend of mine is also a national figure. Which is why I will never reveal my true identity, nor his. All I can tell you is, he reminds me of a chipmunk when he smiles.

This is our 41st dinner date in the last seven months. I never meant our relationship to last this long. I thought 5, 7, 10 dates would satiate my curiosity about going down the path I thought I'd never go. We all think we'd never sink to a certain level, but we subconsciously pile excuse upon excuse, until we have done what was once unthinkable.

Neither his power, his money, nor his looks is the reason I'm here inside a mall waiting for our dinner for the 41st time. I really do love him.

Right now, I'm sure wives who are reading this want to burn me alive. But there's the rub. I'd burn me alive, too. My mother is a victim, too. My father is cheating on her. It makes my blood curdle that he has the gall to step into our home, share meals on our table, and sleep under our roof after spending time with his mistress. He keeps telling my mother she's the only one. His sight makes me want to vomit. Yet here I am, taking part in the same game, with someone who is older than my father.

I don't think my Chipmunk is in the same situation. I have never asked him pointblank how things are between him and his wife. But the way he talks about going home, it's as if they were estranged. He sleeps alone but he sees his kids, two of whom are older than me.

He has told me he had a mistress before. It sounded like they weren't discreet. I thought this may be what broke up his marriage. Or perhaps this is the picture I've fabricated in my mind, my excuse for doing what was once unthinkable: I didn't break them up; they were broken before he found me.

Another justification is that his wife has already accepted their separation, unlike my father who lies through his teeth.

Excuses, excuses—they are the seeds of sin. We fall from grace soon after we believe the excuses we make to justify the means to achieve our end, whether it be money, power or love. Herein lies my internal conflict: I know I am wrong, but I continue to be wrong anyway.

In the movie "Troy," Menelaus says of Paris, the man who stole his wife Helen, "His every breath insults me." This is true of every mistress like me. Our every breath insults our lovers' wives. Our every breath insults our mothers. We spit on our mother every time we lie in our lovers' arms. Wouldn't it be poetic justice if someday, when we too are married, our husbands cheated on us? All ye mistresses, take heed.

I keep telling this to my best friend at work, who is also a mistress. But like me, she continues to be wrong anyway. We keep speculating on why our pseudo-boyfriends strayed. We keep asking what we could do to prevent our future husbands from doing the same thing.

To be a cheat-proof wife, do we have to be a Betty Crocker, a trusty best friend, a Kama Sutra expert and a porn starlet all rolled into one? Are all sperm-bearing homo sapiens, polygamous? Can marriage really last?

In our college *barkada* of eight, only two have parents who are still living together harmoniously, and whose fathers are, to the best of their knowledge, *kabit*-less. Is that the statistic now, three out of four husbands frolicking in extra-marital pastures? What girl in her right mind would want to marry in the face of these realities? Perhaps there is wisdom in my *barkada*'s proposal that we all buy a beach-front property when our husbands fail us. Sea, sun, sand, and pedicures away from our gallivanting other-halves.

But here comes the waiter, handing me the food and the bill which my Chipmunk will reimburse. We'll have dinner in his house. We'll laugh and talk about anything under the sun, but mostly we'll talk about his sordid world of politics. By the end of the night, his touch will melt me yet again. I'll lie in his arms, watch him sleep, play with his mole, listen to him snore like I've done so many times. And while he slumbers, I'll tell him I love him without him hearing, the way I said it six years ago when I first saw him on television.

Katie Sy, 26, is a freelance writer.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Game of the rich

"What do we care about protests and coup d'etats and Ms Arroyo's emergency power? That's a game for the rich and powerful and we, the poor, will continue to toil every day regardless of the result."

—Lisa Lakadim, a resident of an urban poor community

Unjustifiable

"You weren't wet. You weren't cold. You weren't hungry and yet you did these things."

—US District Judge Larry Burns, sentencing former US Rep. Randy Cunningham to eight years in prison for taking $2.4 million in bribes

Abandoned quest

"As events go, I don't think there is a sincere search for truth."

—Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles, decrying the administration's response to the call of Catholic bishops to pursue the truth behind the "Hello Garci" controversy

Risky experiment

"We cannot allow anybody to experiment with our liberties."

—Rene Saguisag, urging the Supreme Court to stop President Macapagal-Arroyo from issuing a state of national emergency

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GMA's Waterloo in the making

UNDERSECRETARY LAURA PASCUA of the Department of Budget and Management is 100 percent right: "[I]nept, lazy and absentee" government employees must be weeded out. (PDI, 2/18/06)

However, the government's "Rationalization Program" does not provide a guarantee that only the truly inept, lazy and frequent absentee employees are going to be weeded out.

If Pascua is bent on cleansing the bureaucracy of incompetents and scalawags, then, by all means, all government employees should be subjected to a written IQ test and evaluated as to their individual work performance, efficiency and effectiveness. Those who fail should be given their walking papers outright.

What is disheartening to note is that the "*bata-bata*" system is widely practiced in many, if not all, government agencies.

The irrational and cruel Rationalization Program could ignite a potential "social time bomb," the explosion of which could cause further destabilization and worsen the economic crisis and the incidence of criminality and poverty; and alienate people from the government, which we don't want to happen. Ultimately, the program could drag President Macapagal-Arroyo to her own Waterloo.

—ROMY V. LOFAMIA,
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Barangay Greater Lagro,
Novaliches, Quezon City

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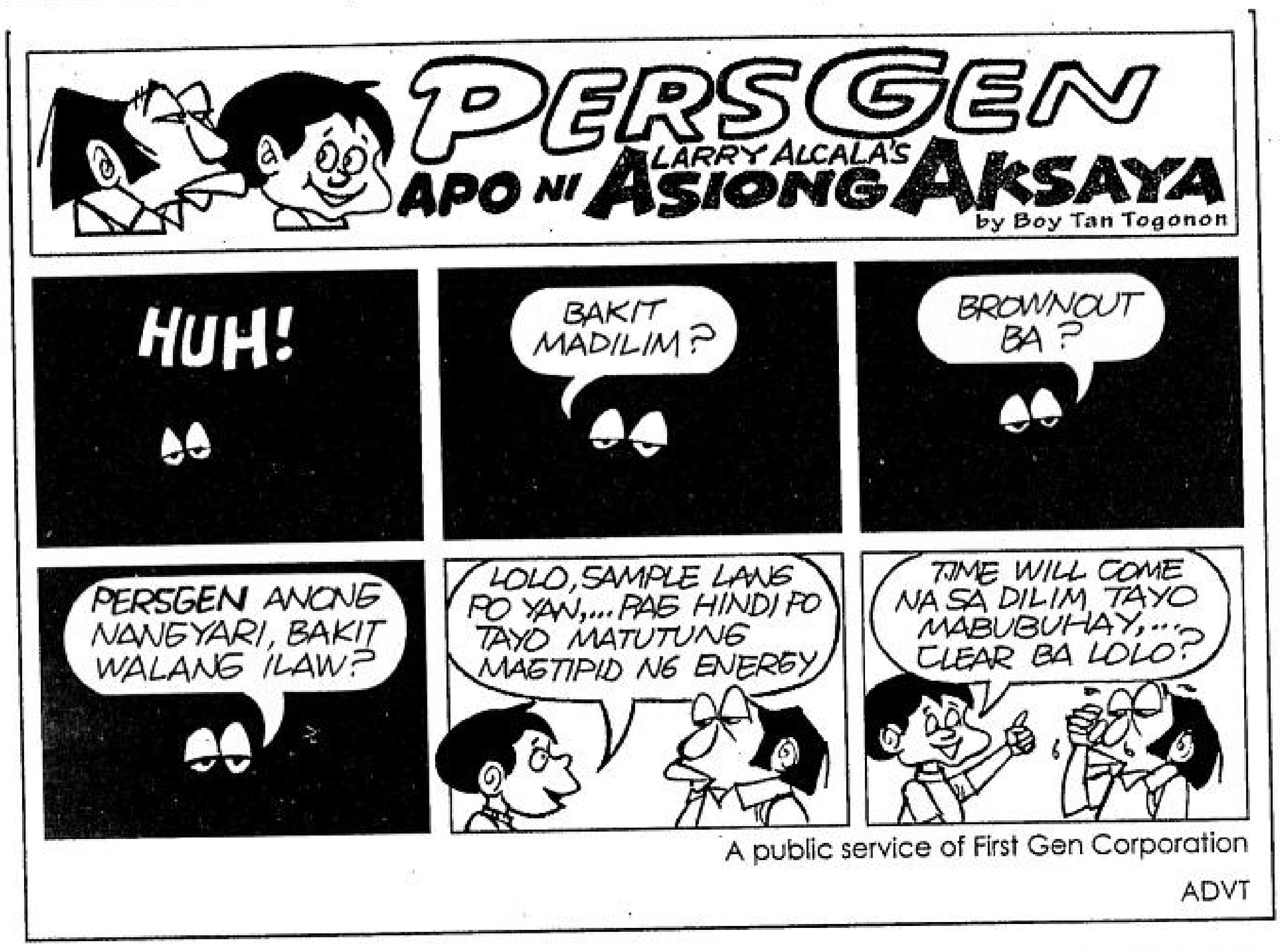
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by Boy Tan Togonon
HUH!
BAKIT MADILIM?
BROWNOUT BA?
PERSGEN ANONG NANGYARI, BAKIT WALANG ILAW?
LOLO, SAMPLE LANG PO YAN,... PAG HINDI PO TAYO MATUTUNG MAGTIPID NG ENERGY
TIME WILL COME NA SA DILIM TAYO MABUBUHAY,...? CLEAR BA LOLO?

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Scared of losing face

THE GENERAL PERCEPTION is: Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo refuses to step down because of her lust for power.

I see it in a different light. I presume the reason she holds on to the presidency is not the fear of losing power, but the fear of losing face. Seen in this light, the present political crisis becomes understandable.

If she withstands all the political tremors rocking her regime until her term ends (be it by 2010 or by Charter change), she has the chance to be hailed as the strongest President this country ever had, her legitimacy notwithstanding.

No doubt, any president would like to be remembered in the best way possible, and this is what Ms Arroyo is trying to do despite the odds.

She has indeed learned the lessons of Edsa; she would never allow herself to be remembered in history, going the same way as Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada did.

—BHEEJEY A. AMAR,
publications editor,
Uplift Philippines,
287 A. Mabini St.,
Maypajo,
Caloocan City

An ignorant party factotum

IN A LETTER TO THE EDITOR, Manuel P. Mejorada, provincial administrator of Iloilo (PDI, 3/13/06), suggested that INQUIRER columnist Belinda Olivares-Cunanan should have double-checked her facts regarding the party affiliation of the Iloilo leaders who attended the Liberal Party convention at the Manila Hotel. In that convention Manila Mayor Lito Atienza was elected the new president of the party.

The Manila Hotel election was not a sham election. It was a legitimate act of the LP general assembly attended by party members from all over the country. It is true that there were many non-LP members who attended the meeting but they were sworn in later as party members after the election, not before.

Mayor Raul Banias of Concepcion did not walk out of the convention. The truth is that he and the other mayors from Iloilo were invited to a special meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The four Iloilo board members who were in that convention were invited as observers. The allegation that I, the lone Liberal Party board member in the convention, had earlier been expelled from the party is not true. I dissociated myself from the administration of Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas on the issue of rampant graft and corruption.

The Liberal Party members in Western Visayas no longer recognizes Sen. Franklin Drilon as party president. Lakas party members attended the LP convention simply to affirm the Lakas-LP coalition supporting President Arroyo. Drilon, as former party leader, violated this agreement of the coalition to support the President, without consulting the coalition's other members.

However, we cannot blame Mejorada for his ignorance of the latest political developments. He is not privy to intra-party matters for he is just a minor factotum of some political leaders in Iloilo.

—EMMANUEL GALLAR,
senior board member
and spokesman,
Liberal Party-Iloilo Chapter

No break-in at the House

QUOTING ANONYMOUS SOURCES, the INQUIRER published on March 13 a news report about an alleged break-in between January 2005 and February 2005 at the House of Representatives South Lobby storage area where ballot boxes of election returns from the 2004 national elections are being kept.

This is a totally malicious fabrication—a polluted work of fiction—from a source who conveniently hides behind the cloak of anonymity while hurling accusations, the nature of which demands full identification as a source of vital information.

This matter is clearly a recycled issue; it is being revived during a period of unrest. The purported CD allegedly containing footage of the break-in is tainted with malice and falsehood. No break-in is possible in the storage room since it is secured with padlocks and is on a 24-hour watch by the House security, backed up by a closed-circuit monitoring system.

Records from the sergeant at arms of the House contain no report of any break-in between January 2005 and February 2005—or at any other day for that matter.

I affirm that the House has guarded zealously—and to the utmost of our capacity—the integrity of the subject ballot boxes and the election documents and paraphernalia contained therein.

—ROBERTO NAZARENO,
secretary general,
House of Representatives,
National Government Center,
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

Justice derailed is justice denied

WE WHO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS of witchhunts shall never allow ourselves to be used for another one.

The Arroyo administration's state of emergency may have been lifted, but its chilling effect remains. In its wake, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez has moved to prosecute Representatives Satur Ocampo, Joel Virador, Teodoro Casiño, Lisa Maza, Rafael Mariano and Crispin Beltran for their "alleged involvement in the bloody 'purges' conducted by the Communist Party of the Philippines in the 1980s 'to flush out suspected government spies." (PDI, 3/2/06)

We of the Peace Advocates for Truth, Healing and Justice (Path)—the torture survivors and kin of the "killing fields" victims—are deeply appalled by this turn of events. What we seek is the truth untainted by narrow political agendas and maneuvers. We have been persevering for justice and seeking the remains of the disappeared. Now with the government's draconian measures to stifle dissent, the legitimacy of our cause is being jeopardized by its attempts to expropriate the issue for political expediency.

The blanket charge against the six legislators for the crimes that attended the anti-infiltration operations muddles the issue and in no way serves our quest for truth and justice. The only way to ascertain the culpability for these crimes is through an official investigation devoid of politics. A legitimate inquest could best be undertaken by impartial bodies like the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights or the International Committee of the Red Cross, with which we already had initial dialogues. National bodies like the Commission on Human Rights, the House Committee on Human Rights, or the Philippine courts may be in a position to conduct such investigations as long as impartiality is assured.

All persons liable for the purges must not go scot-free. But neither can we let our case be used by any regime to persecute the innocent and buttress repressive rule. We stand by our principle of neutrality and impartiality. Justice cannot be served through unjust circumstances.

—ROBERT FRANCIS GARCIA,
secretary general,
ROGEL NAVARRO, chair,
Peace Advocates for Truth,
Justice and Healing (Path),
45 Matimtiman cor. Magiting Sts.,
Teachers' Village, Diliman, QC

To build a morally strong nation

ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE Feb. 8 issue of the INQUIRER, a news item, titled "Ma'am GMA teaches kids English, geography," caught my attention. I earnestly hope that one day the President will also find time to teach our children honesty and all the time-honored moral values accepted in all civilized and progressive countries, as a first step in developing morally strong future leaders for our nation and in eradicating graft and corruption.

Dishonesty breeds graft and corruption, one of the underlying causes of poverty. A World Bank report says that 40 percent of government revenues are lost to corruption. The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism confirms the graft and corrupt practices of some of our lawmakers and high government officials who are hopelessly rotten to the core. And Transparency International listed the Philippines as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, mainly because of the dishonesty of our political leaders.

Through education or by teaching moral values, we can produce honest leaders. Thus can we stamp out the culture of graft and corruption and eventually alleviate the suffering of our people. I hope that the President, toward this end, will direct her policy advisers for education to focus their attention on the family home, which is the first "school" where children get their first lessons on honesty and other positive and desirable values. These values are later reinforced by the school, the community and the church, which are known to be the traditional social institutions that, aside from the family, play an important role in building morally strong persons.

A morally strong family is the bedrock of a strong nation. In this light, the President should appoint an education secretary (as well as undersecretaries) who is well-grounded in the field of social and behavioral sciences, understands human behavior and is willing to make the teaching of moral values part of the curricula of public and private schools.

There is no sense in changing the form of our government from presidential to parliamentary system if we do not develop a morally strong nation.

A system of government does not lie, cheat or steal; it is the intelligent but morally bankrupt political leaders who do, thereby depriving our children and future generations of Filipinos a bright future.

—FLORENCIO O. VILLARIN,
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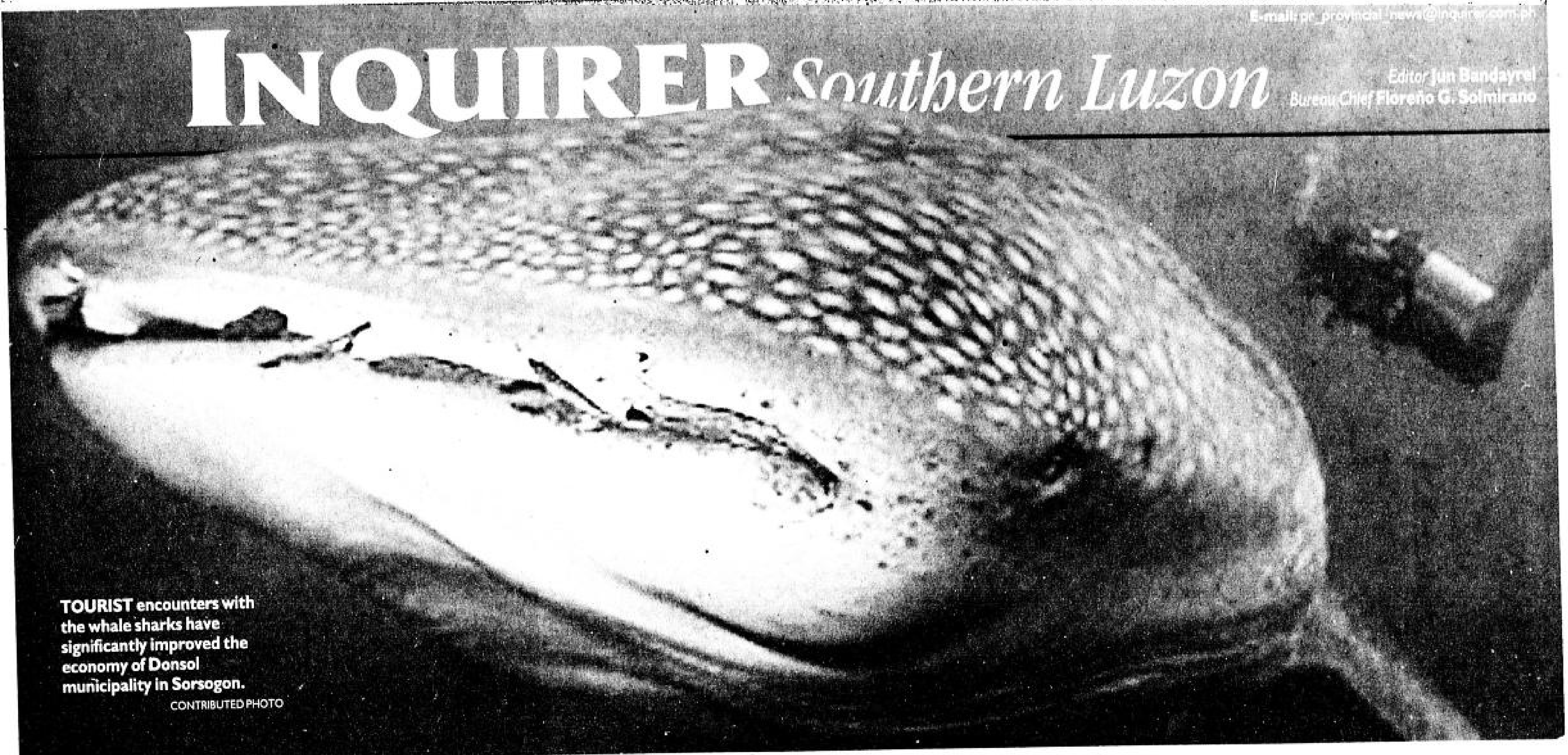

TOURIST encounters with the whale sharks have significantly improved the economy of Donsol municipality in Sorsogon.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

'Butanding'-driven economy

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
Donsol, Sorsogon

SINCE ITS REDISCOVERY in 1998 in the coastal town of Donsol in northwestern Sorsogon, the whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*), locally known as the "*butanding*," has not only continued to lure more foreign tourists but also made people increasingly aware of the need to protect the world's biggest fish.

Tourist "encounters" or "interactions" with the gentle creature has buoyed up the local economy and created more jobs for residents.

Once a communist rebel lair, Donsol has thus become one of the most visited places in the province. It has become one of the top tourist attractions in the country, drawing visitors from the United States, Australia, Germany and other Asian countries, such as Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

Tourist haven

Latest reports from the Department of Tourism showed that over the past eight years, Donsol's economy has surged as a result of whale shark watching and interaction from September to May.

Sales and investment missions abroad have proved that these nature activities is highly sustainable and complement the promotion of Donsol as a prime tourist destination that is attractive to both domestic and international markets.

In 2004, the Time Asia magazine described the interaction with the *butanding* as "Asia's Best Animal Encounter."

"[The] *butanding*'s friendly charm has not only made Donsol the Whale Shark Capital of the Philippines but also made the country Asia's Whale Shark Capital," DOT regional director Maria Ravanilla said. The whale shark is touted to live up to a hundred years and can grow up to 18 meters and weigh up to 24 tons.

More revenues

It took the municipality and its residents four years before they felt the success of the "eco-interaction tour" program. With revenues derived from its tourism efforts, Donsol was elevated from a fifth-class municipality (annual income: P7 million to P13 million) to fourth-class (P13 million-P21 million).

"Likewise, from Rank 76 in the poverty line among the poorest municipalities of the region, we are surprised that Donsol now ranks 17," said Salvador Adrao Jr., municipal tourism officer.

Adrao attributed the improvement to "the robust growth in the tourist traffic and receipts for the past eight years due to the *butanding*."

In 1998, records showed 800 registered visitors and a total income of P454,875 generated from registration fees and boat rentals. Last year, the number of visitors increased to about 7,200, with total income from the eco-interaction tour reaching P9 million.

Donsol contributed about P35 million to the country's gross domestic income, P15 million of which went to the municipality.

"This year, especially this summer and during Holy Week, we really expect an increase because of the successful visit last Jan. 23 of at least six foreign delegates who attended the Asian tourism forum in Davao," Ravanilla said. The delegates came from Canada, Germany, Taiwan, The Netherlands, the United States and Pakistan.

"They were impressed because it was their first time to interact with the friendly *butanding* and they were fascinated as well with the way locals protect their environment," Ravanilla said.

Upgrade

In 2002, the program underwent extensive improvements, especially through the efforts of the Municipal Tourism Council (MTC) which recruited the Butanding Interaction Officers (BIOs) and formed the Butanding Operators' Association (BOA).

The upgrading measures led to the creation of more than 300 jobs related to tour services. These include whale shark spotters, boat guides, van drivers and other volunteers, including the Bantay Dagat.

More than 200 fishermen have gained seasonal employment.

Alan Amanse, chief of the BIOs and one of the guides, said most of the fishermen benefited from the training program conducted every year by the MTC.

Ruel Pine, project manager of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), said his group's business development plan study showed that Donsol had been able to set eco-tourism standards that could be upheld globally.

Aside from monitoring and research, the WWF is pursuing plans to draw up a fisheries management program in support of sustainable efforts to protect the whale sharks and eco-tourism.

This will address environmental issues, such as illegal fishing and exploitation of fishing resources in the future, it said.

COLORFUL hobie cats take off from Donsol for island destinations in Bicol and the Visayas areas.
RONNIE LORIJO

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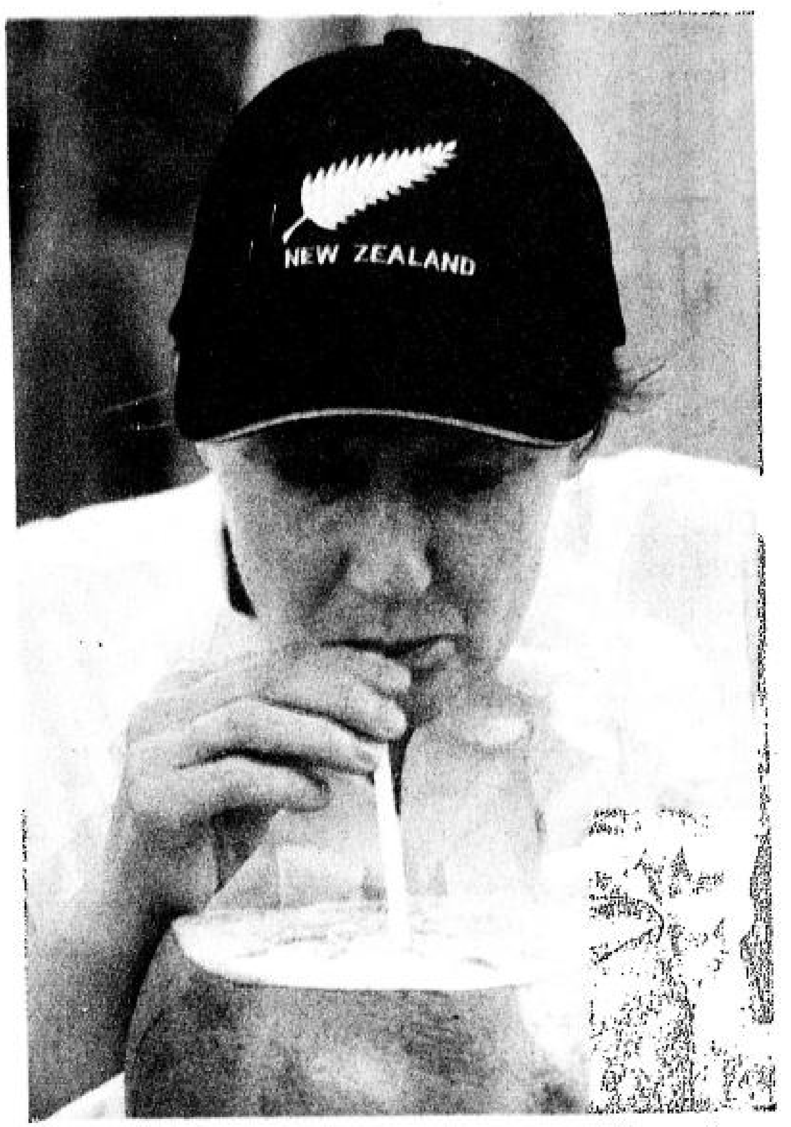
ALL DOLLED UP in blue, President Arroyo extends a big welcome to Vice President Noli de Castro during the dinner she hosted for visiting New Zealand PM Helen Clark at the Bohol Beach Club, Panglao, Bohol. LYN RILLON



NEW ZEALANDER PM Helen Clark sips coconut juice like a native during a visit in Pamilacan Island in Baclayon, Bohol. LYN RILLON

Nene fumes; he's in Palace video on 'enemies of the state'

From page A1

as the narrator relates a plan by a mob of opposition supporters to lay siege to Malacañang.

The 15-minute documentary is book-ended by the televised broadcast of Ms Arroyo outlining her reasons for declaring the state of emergency and footage of her mingling with students, indigenous people and the elderly.

It was directed by Ms Arroyo's media consultant, Lupita Aquino-Kashiwahara, and featured Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga and Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon alternately talking about the coup plot hatched by leftist and rightist elements. The narrator was dzRB and NBN 4 anchor Allan Allanigue.

Pimentel's daughter managed to catch a glimpse of the documentary being shown on National Broadcasting Network on Tuesday night. A copy of the CD was also being distributed to peasants in Bulacan, according to the senator.

A Palace source said that RTVM (Radio Television Malacañang) made an initial batch of 3,000 copies of the video, which was shown repeatedly on all three government-owned stations.

Worse than portraying him as an "enemy of the state," the documentary was a virtual invitation to "assassinate" him, said Pimentel, a critic of the administration.

Death warrant

"When words 'enemy of the state' are used by the AFP to maintain law and order, that is dangerous. It is a death warrant because the military, unlike the police, will shoot first before asking questions," the senator said in the interview.

Pimentel suspected that the CD, which is enclosed in a plastic jacket bearing the image of Ms Arroyo and Senga, was produced and distributed on Malacañang orders.

"I suppose that Mr. (Press Secretary Ignacio) Bunye or Mr. (Cerge) Remonde would probably have a hand in this," he said in his privilege speech on Tuesday.

"If they're not [involved], then somebody must be held accountable because they are using government money to place the life of a senator at risk by this reckless accusation," the senator later said in the interview.

Apologize

He said he wanted the Office of the President to apologize.

Pimentel also demanded that Malacañang stop the showing of the documentary on TV and the distribution of the CD "because they're destabilizing the situation in the country."

The material for the documentary was largely based on information forwarded by the military, specifically "Operation Hackle" documents purportedly seized from Magdalo fugitive Lt. Lawrence San Juan.

The video showed Senga's narration of how then Scout Rangers head Brig. Gen. Danny Lim and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin talked to him in his office on Feb. 23 about the plan of the two officers to join the rallies on Feb. 24, the 20th anniversary of Edsa I, with their men.

PIMENTEL demands apology

The documentary also pinned down Lim's role in the uprising as the "overall ground commander of the military component" with a video showing him saluting troops beside the President.

Between Left and Right

For his part, Esperon disclosed a supposed memorandum of agreement between the CPP (represented by Leo Velasco, Prudencio Calubid and Adelberto Silva) and the Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (represented by Col. Rafael Galvez, Col. Jake Malajacan and Lt. Lawrence San Juan) to overthrow the government.

Esperon also disclosed plans of leftist and rightist elements to attack military camps, eliminate high-value targets and assassinate the President, a Cabinet member and the top brass of the AFP.

Esperon also spoke of Operation Hackle, the participation of lawyer Jose Christopher Belmonte (who, he claimed, was a staff member of the CPP-NPA), and the culpability of ex-Sen. Gringo Honasan (who was referred to by his alias Bitoy) whom he accused of praising the CPP and thanking it for reaching an agreement after two-and-a-half years of negotiations.

March

The documentary said it was Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo who acknowledged the alliance among the forces of Estrada, the Hyatt 10 and former President Corazon Aquino and their plan to gather 20,000 protesters to start a march on Feb. 22, proceed to the People Power monument on Feb. 23, and converge at Mendiola Bridge on Feb. 24.

During the run-up to the planned three-day march, the documentary claimed that the NPA had stepped up attacks on the military.

The documentary said the Kamaganak ng Bayan was not only made up of junior officers but also students, professionals and church members which it did not identify.

While the documentary used mostly file video of nameless protesters, a footage of Senators Jamby Madrigal and Pimentel attending one of the rallies was flashed on screen while the narrator spoke of the group's contingency plan to bring 500,000 marchers to the Palace gates by May 1.

Madrigal and Pimentel were the only prominent opposition personalities featured on the video that were not named by either Senga or Esperon.

High-fat hospital diet alarms Beltran's wife

From page A1

serving food that could only worsen the condition of her hypertensive and diabetic husband.

"The PNP hospital does not seem to have a competent dietician, or any dietician at all. This is more of a prison than a hospital," Rosario Beltran told reporters.

"Ka Bel's custodians at the PNP [have been] poisoning him with inappropriate and unhealthy food ever since his detention last Feb. 25," Rosario added. Beltran, 73, was arrested on rebellion charges.

Rosario said breaded fried *galunggong* (fish) seemed to be a staple food ration at the hospital as well as a meat dish with fat trimmings. She said that Beltran was also served chicken neck with the skin- on and oil-based sauce.

Family brings meals

"Those viands won't do Ka Bel any good since he has high blood pressure and he just suffered a stroke in July 2005. The vegetables they serve are also those that his doctors have advised against," Rosario said, referring to string beans and *okra*.

"They don't even bother to serve any fruit," Rosario said.

Beltran's family has since been bringing food to keep him from being affected by the high-fat hospital diet—the meal also served to other patients.

"The family is bringing in the food that he needs. But since he's in the hospital, isn't it the doctors' concern to provide him with meals that would not worsen his condition?" said Lisa Ito, Beltran's public information officer.

"The doctors at the PNP hospital checked on him and they know that he can't eat high-fat, high-cholesterol food. Can't they prepare a separate meal for him given his condition?" she added.

Fellow Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano called for the release of Beltran. "He should be treated in an environment that's not hostile," Mariano told the INQUIRER.

"If his condition dictates that he be given a specific diet, he should be given that proper diet," he added.

No VIP treatment

Rosario denied statements by Speaker Jose de Venecia and PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao that Beltran was being given VIP treatment.

"What VIP treatment are these two talking about? Inappropriate food is being served. There's no oxygen tank, alarm bell nor dextrose bottle inside his room. It's all lies and press releases that they are taking care of my husband well," Rosario said.

Evangelist Eddie Villanueva of the Jesus Is Lord Movement yesterday visited Beltran to pray over the lawmaker to fulfill an "apostolic duty."

"This is a Christian act of love," he said. "I'd like to appeal to the Arroyo government to immediately order the release of Congressman Beltran, [he] being an old man and elected by the people and also (being) hypertensive." *With a report from Luige A. del Puerto*

Giant mall opens first breastfeeding station

From page A1

that can seat two to three mothers at a time.

The SM management has also organized an orientation course for security guards on how to assist nursing mothers anywhere in the mall.

Similar efforts are under way in other SM malls.

Brink of extinction

"The breastfeeding culture is now on the brink of extinction," Esguerra warned on Tuesday at the opening of the pioneering nursing station.

The SM project is seen as a significant step toward reviving breastfeeding among Filipinos who, according to the World Health Organization, spend P21.5 billion yearly on infant formula.

'Best interest of children

"Optimal breastfeeding is in the best interest of children everywhere and fulfills children's rights to survival, development and protection," Dr. Nicolas Alipui, Unicef country representative in the Philippines, said in a speech.

As many as 16,000 Filipino children under five years die every year simply because they're not breastfed, Alipui said, citing WHO figures.

Another disturbing statistic is that infants reared on milk formula are "7 to 25 times" more likely to die of diarrhea than a breastfed baby, he said.

They're also at risk of acquiring pneumonia "5 to 50 times" more than their breastfed counterparts.

'Sure-fire investment'

The recommendation, according to Alipui, is exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a baby's life, then continued breastfeeding with complementary feeding for two years and beyond.

"Clearly, breastfeeding is a sure-fire investment in children's educational success and ability to participate increasingly in society," he said.

Conversely, he said, "the lack of breastfeeding will undermine any efforts to educate the child in later childhood—when the lost IQ points can no longer be regained."

Unknown to many people, breastfeeding helps shield children from neglect, abuse and exploitation, Alipui said.

"Breastfeeding forms a strong bond between mother and child," he said. "It stimulates the release of 'feel-good' hormones that relax the mother and strengthens her nurturing feelings toward the baby."

Case in point

Alipui said a case in point was the decision of the Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital to replace its nursery with a program on room-in and full breastfeeding among mothers.

"The rate of child abandonment dropped from over a dozen a year to nearly zero," he said.

Male nurse wants to be a she legally; court says no

From page A1

The Department of Justice, through Prosecutor Benedict Pataras, opposed the petition, saying that sex change was not one of the grounds provided for by law for a change of any entry in a birth certificate.

Pataras told Judge Francis Buliyat that the man had "no cause of action." There is no error in the birth certificate from the beginning and thus there is nothing to be changed or corrected, the prosecutor argued.

'Genital reassignment'

The petitioner had a "genital sex reassignment surgery" at the Aikchol Hospital in Chonburi, Thailand, on Sept. 4, 2003.

An obstetrician–gynecologist in Baguio City conducted a post-operation examination on the man in June last year and certified that he had "physical and external female genital sex features."

In his petition, filed through lawyer Rosemarie Pia Sagsago, the man disclosed that since childhood, he had possessed the "psychological and emotional manifestations of a female."

He said he was prompted to undergo a battery of psychiatric tests for gender identity disorder in London following his employment there as a nurse. The doctor who conducted the tests advised him to undergo surgery since he had "lived exclusively in [a] female role," he said.

But Pataras said the man's operation would not qualify him as a female "in point of law."

"There was no error in registering the facts of the birth of the petitioner. To deliberately state in his birth certificate that he was born a female is tantamount to falsification," he said in his opposition.

Dictionary definition

He cited the dictionary definition of a female as "one belonging to the sex which gives birth to young or produces eggs."

"This definition presupposes the possessions of organs that would enable one to conceive and give birth," Pataras said. "It is then the possession of all female reproductive organs that would make a female a real female."

Recently, the Court of Appeals reversed a Manila RTC decision that granted the change of sex of a man who also underwent surgery to become a woman.

In a 10-page decision, the CA said the man could not change his gender because his birth certificate did not contain any error.

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Negros silica mines allowed to reopen

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—SILICA MINING OPERATIONS have resumed in Ayungon, Negros Oriental, two weeks after the area was shut down last month due to health and environment hazards and failure to pay local taxes.

Gov. George Arnaiz ordered on March 9 the lifting of the suspension of the mining activity of Goodyield Resources Development Inc. (GRDI). The company had been producing 20,000 to 30,000 metric tons of silica every month.

Arnaiz based his order on the recommendation of an inspection team that found allegations against the company to be untrue.

The firm operates in Barangay Maaslum, Ayungon, 82 km north of here. GRDI conducts quarry operations on behalf of the permit holder, the Heirs of Arturo Zayco (HAZ) Sr.

Vivien Arrieta, community officer of the Environment and Natural Resources Division, said that in 2003, HAZ secured a permit from the provincial government for small-scale quarrying of silica in a 10-hectare site while awaiting approval of a permit for large scale mining.

Arrieta said the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Central Visayas granted the application of HAZ for large-scale mining, covering about 500 hectares of land.

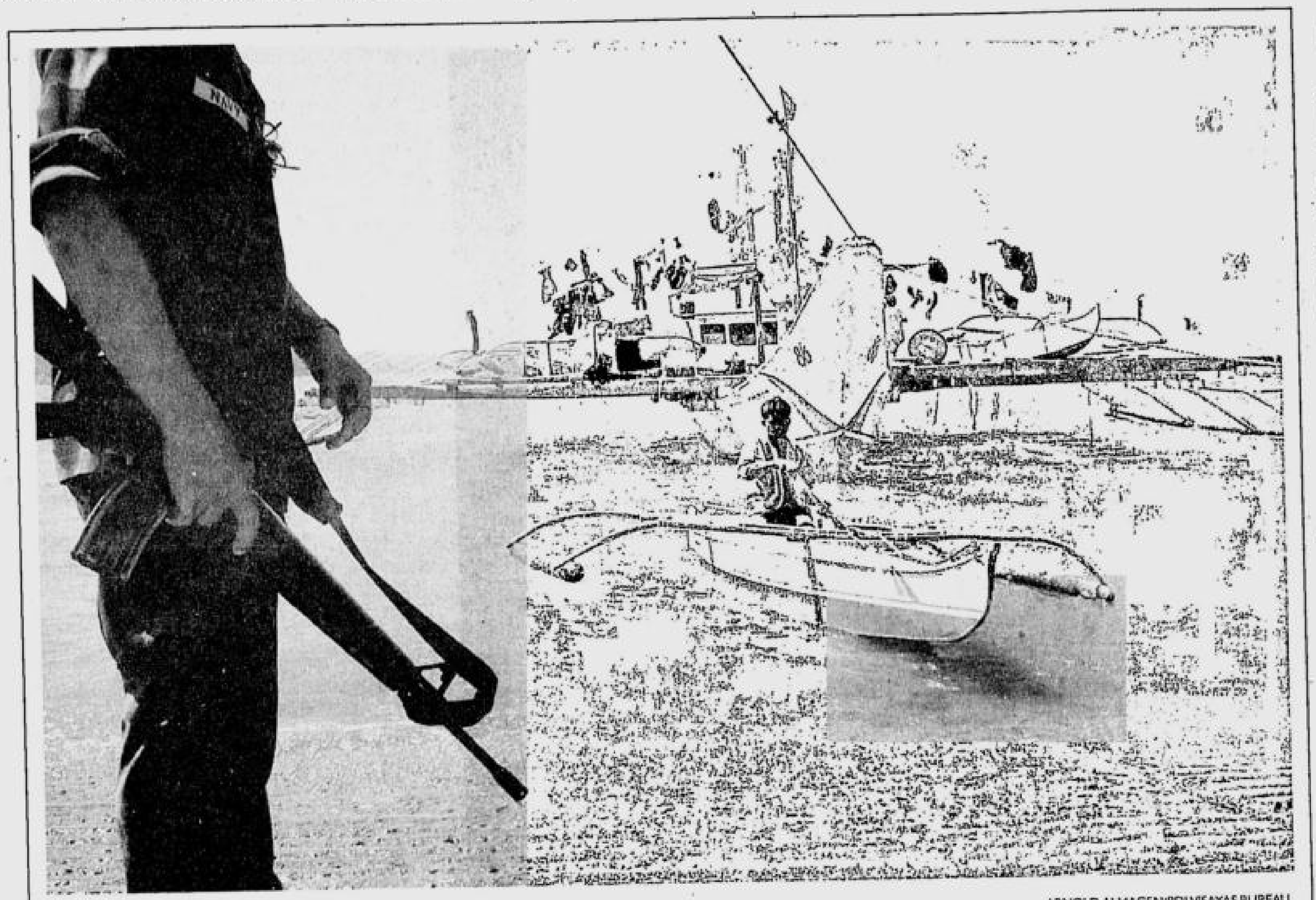
HAZ later entered into a contract with GRDI for the latter to operate the mine.

Arnaiz ordered the suspension of GRDI's operations on Feb. 27 following complaints from barangay officials and residents that the mining activity was harmful to their health and caused environmental destruction.

The governor lifted the suspension on the recommendation of a multipartite monitoring team, which visited the site on March 3 and came up with a report favorable to GRDI.

The team was composed of representatives from the MGB and the Environmental Management Bureau; officials of Barangay Maaslum, the municipal government and the office of the governor; and the Ayungon Ministers Association.

Arnaiz, in lifting the suspension, said the operator should honor its commitment to pay taxes to the municipality.



ARNOLD ALMACEN/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

CATCH
Authorities bring to shore a fishing boat believed to be operating illegally in Iloilo City. The boat yielded 4,000 tons of a fish called *lison* that authorities said were caught with the use of dynamites.

CHR lists 6 deaths linked to war games

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE COMmission on Human Rights in Western Mindanao yesterday said at least six people identified with anti-"Balikatan" protests in Sulu had died in the hands of unidentified assailants since Jan. 28.

Jose Manuel Mamauag, CHR regional director, said the killings were uncovered during a weeklong investigation of the series of recent violent incidents in Sulu.

"Six of those killed were anti-Balikatan protesters or identified with the group opposing the stay of the Americans in Sulu," he said.

He said the first killing occurred on Jan. 28 when unidentified armed men attacked a neighborhood in Barangay Lambayong, Patikul.

A person died in the attack while 11 others were injured.

Mamauag said the following day, a certain Sappayani and his son died during a night raid reportedly by Marines in Patikul.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to get comments from local Army commander Brig. Gen. Nehemias Pajarito. The military official would not take calls made to his mobile phone.

On Jan. 30, another father and son were slain in Barangay Tulay in Jolo, Mamauag said.

Mamauag said that on Feb. 6, Abujar Nasari, a student, was abducted while jogging on the Jolo airstrip. His decapitated body was found near the Department of Education office.

"There is really a breakdown in peace and order in Sulu and all these incidents occurred at the height of the Balikatan," he said.

Aside from the killings, Mamauag said soldiers were being accused of harassing people who campaigned against the Balikatan, which ended early this month.

On March 2, Army soldiers allegedly blasted the door of a house owned by the Jalam family in Jolo.

"A C4 bomb was used to forcibly open the door, they also used their armored vehicle to destroy the gate," Nelda Jalam said.

She said the soldiers were looking for his brother, Jahim Jalam, who works with the local environment office in Luuk town.

Mamauag said Jahim Jalam was among the organizers of the first anti-Balikatan rally in Sulu.

"The military will have some explaining to do," he said of the violence in Sulu. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Suspected Abu member nabbed

PARANG, Maguindanao—Soldiers and policemen arrested a suspected Abu Sayyaf bandit who was allegedly involved in the abduction of 53 teachers and students in Basilan in 2001. Burham Sali, also known as commander Abu Sanny, was arrested in a raid on his hideout on March 6 on the outskirts of Barangay Facoma, said Maj. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, chief of the Army's 6th Infantry Division. Dema-ala said Sali did not resist arrest after soldiers and policemen surrounded his hideout. He said Sali had been providing refuge to other high-ranking Abu Sayyaf bandits, including Abu Solaiman, Khadaffy Janjalani and Isnilon Hapilon, in Central Mindanao.

Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

60 MILF members yield

PARANG, Maguindanao—At least 60 members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) surrendered to the military ahead of the resumption of peace talks in Kuala Lumpur. The rebels, who operate in the town of Datu Montawal, also surrendered firearms, the Army's 6th Infantry Division commander Maj. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala said. "They are not recycled (surrenderers). We have the records of those who surrendered before. The residents of Montawal can testify that they are active members of the rebel group," Dema-ala said. But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said they were not regular members of the front but armed followers of Mohammad Anduy, a barangay chair in Montawal town.

Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Apology for ship woes

BACOLOD CITY—Aboitiz shipping's SuperFerry 9, which was bound for Bacolod, Iligan and Ozamiz cities from Manila with 1,300 passengers on board, developed technical problems at sea, delaying its arrival here from 1 p.m. Monday to 3 p.m. Tuesday. John Rojo, assistant vice president for corporate communications, said SuperFerry 9 developed steering problems near Balbagon Island, 98 nautical miles from here, in the northeastern part of Panay Island at 10:15 a.m. Monday. SuperFerry 2 was called in to tow it to the city, he said. Of the 1,300 passengers and crew on board, 391 were bound for Bacolod. He said the firm apologized to the passengers and their relatives for the 26-hour delay.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Whirlwind in Panay

ROXAS CITY—A whirlwind that hit six villages in Panay town on March 10 destroyed at least 10 houses in Barangay Ilaya. Panay Mayor Felipe Barredo said the municipal government would give financial assistance to the families. Sen. Manuel Roxas II, who hails from Capiz, also offered financial help.

Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau

Wescom mangrove planting

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The Armed Forces' Western Command celebrated its 30th year by planting about 1,000 mangrove seedlings off its headquarters here. One of the guests, Mayor Edward Hagedorn, underscored the issue of global warming, which he said might also define the country's well-being. He told Wescom commander Rear Admiral Tirso Danga, the officers and personnel of the command, and other guests that "environmental terrorism is more disastrous than actual terrorism."

Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

7 cops sacked

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Police officials in Cagayan relieved seven policemen, who were disarmed by communist rebels in their detachment in Alcala, Cagayan, on March 9. Provincial police director Senior Supt. James Andres Melad said the policemen were cooking dinner in the community precinct outpost in Barangay Bayubayug when 14 New People's Army rebels arrived at past 7 p.m. The rebels took at least four firearms and mobile phones from the policemen.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Customs men check Sariaya grains terminal

A PRIVATE GRAINS TERMINAL with a port in Sariaya, Quezon that was financed through a P1.5 billion government-guaranteed loan is attracting so much attention now as customs agents began looking into allegations that it was being used for smuggling.

A group of businessmen, who expressed suspicion that the port was becoming a smuggling hub, said it was being used to bring in untaxed shipments of corn and other agricultural products.

But officials of Nation Granary Inc. (NGI), which owns the port, said the 33,000 metric tons of corn that are loaded in the vessel May Raffles, currently docked at the port, are covered with importation documents and tax receipts.

The 33,000 MT of corn, said the group of businessmen, are likely to find their way into the local market and sold at prices far cheaper than local corn.

Documents showed that the corn shipment came from Dalian, China.

Alison Sy, chief executive officer of NGI, said in an interview with the INQUIRER there was nothing irregular about the shipment.

She presented documents showing that the corn shipment was covered by permits from the Bureau of Animal Industry and the Bureau of Customs.

She said the shipment was brought in to test the newly built facilities of NGI's port, which she said would be the largest in Southeast Asia with an 18-meter drop.

She said the grains would be used to test two machines that would unload shipment from ships to conveyor belts that would bring them to silos in the NGI facility in Sariaya.

Sy said there was no undervaluation involved in the shipment.

She showed copies of receipts of payments of duties made for the shipment.

She said banks would not issue her letters of credit to bring in the corn if this was an irregular shipment.

According to an article in the website of United Coconut Planters Bank, which gave the P1.5 billion to finance the NGI project, the facility received P700 million for the importation of equipment from the United States and Europe and P800 million for the purchase of grains.

"The loan ... is secured by a comprehensive guarantee from the Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency (PhilEXIM)," said the UCPB article.

Loans that receive guarantees from the PhilEXIM are, in turn, guaranteed by the national government.

PhilEXIM's website said its corporate objective was to "stimulate, increase and develop the export of goods and services ..."

But the businessmen said the entry of imported corn into the port was suspicious. *With a report from Delfin Mallari, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NorthRail fare for 33km pegged at ₱43, says exec

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—COMMUTERS will pay P43 for a 33-km trip from Caloocan City to Malolos City in Bulacan, when NorthRail begins operations in early 2009.

Jose Cortes Jr., president of the state-owned North Luzon Railways Corp., said the rate (comprised of a P10-boarding fee and P1 for every km) was approved by the investment coordination committee of the National Economic and Development Authority.

The fare, however, would apply only in the first year of NorthRail's operation.

"Once operating costs go higher, NorthRail intends to place a request [for an increase]," Cortes told the INQUIRER in a phone interview on Wednesday. Trains will run on diesel and coco diesel.

The fare set for the NorthRail is about half of the current cost of a ride in buses plying the Metro Manila-Pampanga route.

Cortes said NorthRail could gross an estimated $83.6 million in the first year. The figure was based on the P43 starting rate and on a study by an independent European firm that passengers could reach 160,000 daily for first 10 years and 360,000 passengers daily thereafter.

Minus payments of $37.41 million to China's Export-Import Bank, from which a $1-billion loan was obtained for the project, and $13.4 million to Philippines' Export-Import Bank for loan counterparts, the net income could amount to $32.85 million, he said.

"We will be able to pay the loan," Cortes said.

The first phase of the project costs $421 million. The final package consisted of a 3-percent interest per year and a repayment period of 20 years with no penalty for delays.

China's preferential loan, the biggest so far that it has lent out in Asia, covered 95 percent of the project's cost, Cortes said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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PHILHEALTH CIRCULAR
No. 08, s-2006

TO : ALL PHILHEALTH MEMBERS, ACCREDITED TB DOTS FACILITIES, AND ALL CONCERNED

SUBJECT : Amendment to Accreditation of TB-DOTS Facilities

In support of the policies of the National Tuberculosis Program, the current rules on the TB-DOTS accreditation stated in PhilHealth Circular Number 17 series of 2003 are amended by the following provisions:

A. CERTIFICATION OF TB-DOTS CENTERS
1. The Philippine Coalition Against Tuberculosis (PhilCAT) is co-chair of the National Coordinating Committee – Public Private Mix DOTS (NCC-PPMD). As such, the certification issued by NCC-PPMD is synonymous to the certification issued by PhilCAT.
2. In meritorious cases, PhilHealth will grant TB-DOTS accreditation to facilities even without NCC-PPMD certification after a survey done by its personnel. However, NCC-PPMD certification will be required upon renewal of accreditation.

B. MODIFICATIONS IN THE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR TB-DOTS CENTERS
1. In the absence of a registered Medical Technologist, an NTP-trained microscopist will be required in DOTS facility or referral laboratory for sputum smear examination.
2. For DOTS centers with no capability of performing radiological procedures, a MOA with an X-ray facility will no longer be a requirement for accreditation. However, DOTS centers should still refer patients needing radiologic services to an X-ray facility.

C. LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT (LGU)-OWNED TB-DOTS CENTERS
1. DOTS Centers owned by LGUs are exempted from submission of Mayor's Permit.
2. In order to sustain operations of DOTS Clinics, LGUs are requested to follow the PPMD-recommended allocation of PhilHealth payments.

This Circular shall take effect after fifteen days from publication in the official gazette or any newspaper of general circulation.

All other rules and guidelines not contrary to this circular shall remain in full force and effect.

(Sgd.) LORNA O. FAJARDO, CESO III
OIC, Office of the President and CEO
Date Signed: February 28, 2006

Orphan is top PMA grad

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO CITY – AN ORPHAN from Sto. Domingo, Ilocos Sur, whose education was supported by four sisters working as domestic helpers abroad, will lead the Philippine Military Academy's biggest graduating class on March 25.

Cadet First Class Ariel Toledo, valedictorian of the PMA Mandala Class of 2006, said he would like to dedicate his achievement to the "real heroes" in his family.

"I would like to thank my four elder sisters who worked abroad as DH (domestic helpers or maids) so that my siblings and I would have a good education," the 25-year-Toledo said in Ilocano on Wednesday.

"They were the ones who sacrificed after our parents died," he said.

Toledo, who will receive the presidential saber, the PGMA achievement award for academic excellence and the Philippine Air Force saber during the graduation rites, is the 10th of 12 children of a former policeman and a homemaker.

His sisters Ely Fejeder (now working in Hong Kong), Beth Castro (now in Canada), Immaculada Concepcion Castillo (now in Taiwan) and May Rabanal (now in the United States) are still supporting Toledo's younger siblings in Ilocos Sur. Through the Toledo sisters' support, the family now has two civil engineers, a geodetic engineer and a midwife.

Biggest class

Only Castro was able to finish her studies, Toledo said.

Toledo ranked first among 324 graduates of the Mandala (coined from "Mandirigmang Dangal ng Lahi" or Honorable Warrior of the Race), which is not only the biggest class in PMA's 108-year history but also the class with the most number of magna cum laude (11) and cum laude (37) graduates.

The class also has the most number of women graduates with 37 since PMA started graduating female cadets in 1997.

The other top graduates are: Cadets First Class Francis Rosales of Baguio City, second, who will receive the vice presidential saber and the Philippine Army saber; Romel Sotero of La Trinidad, Benguet, third, who will receive the defense secretary saber and Philippine Navy saber; Ethelbert Aaron Kiunisala of Misamis Oriental, fourth; Michael Gotong of La Trinidad, Benguet, fifth; Amina Abdula of Concepcion, Tarlac, sixth; Noah Hernandez of Kidapawan City, seventh; Ermin Soloren of South Cotabato, eighth; Joe Vergel Santos of Kidapawan City, ninth; and Joy Peñaloza of South Cotabato, 10th.

Except for Abdula and Peñaloza, all those in the Top 10 graduates will graduate magna cum laude.

Toledo, Rosales and Sotero will also be studying in the United States after graduation for being the Jusmag (Joint United States Military Assistance Group) awardees.

Humble beginnings

"Toledo represents the very huge population of PMA graduates who came from humble beginnings. There are many, many success stories in this class and the 324 cadets are themselves individual successes," said Brig. Gen. Leopoldo Maligalig, PMA superintendent.

Maligalig said he is particularly proud of the huge number of graduates in this class and their relatively low attrition rate.

"They are armed only with their dedication and gift of intelligence," Maligalig said of this year's graduates.

Asked about the fear that the graduates would soon be joining their restive alumni, Maligalig said they did not isolate the cadets and they knew what was happening in the country.

"I have a healthy respect for their intelligence and judgment. My only direct instruction is that they set their priorities right," he said.

Childhood dream

Toledo said being a military officer is a childhood dream come true.

"I was attracted by the uniforms of my father and his fellow PC (Philippine Constabulary), that's why I decided to join the military. I also joined all Scouting activities," said Toledo.

He was only in Grade 5 when his father, Providencio Toledo Sr., died. His mother, Pilar, died when he was in his second year in the PMA. It was his sisters who raised the Toledo brood. *With a report from Russell Arador; PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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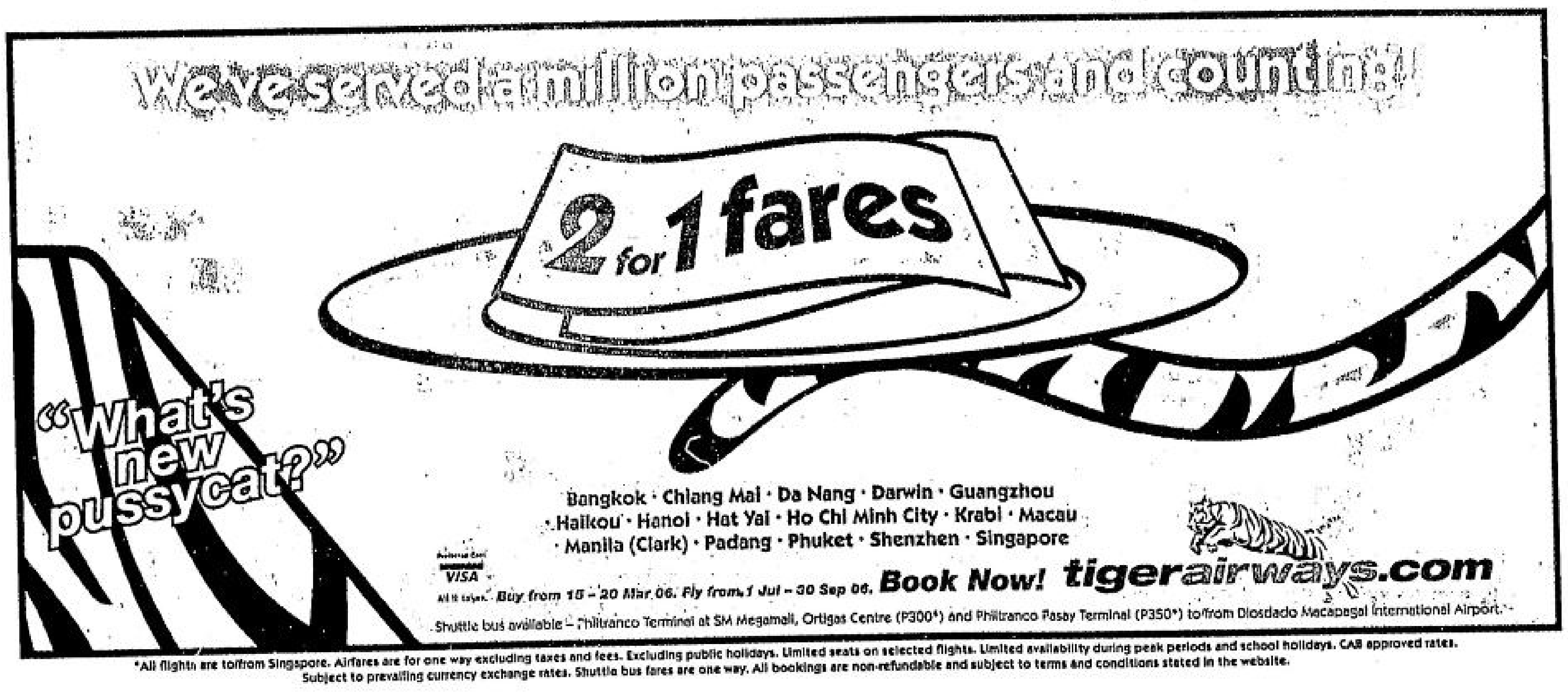

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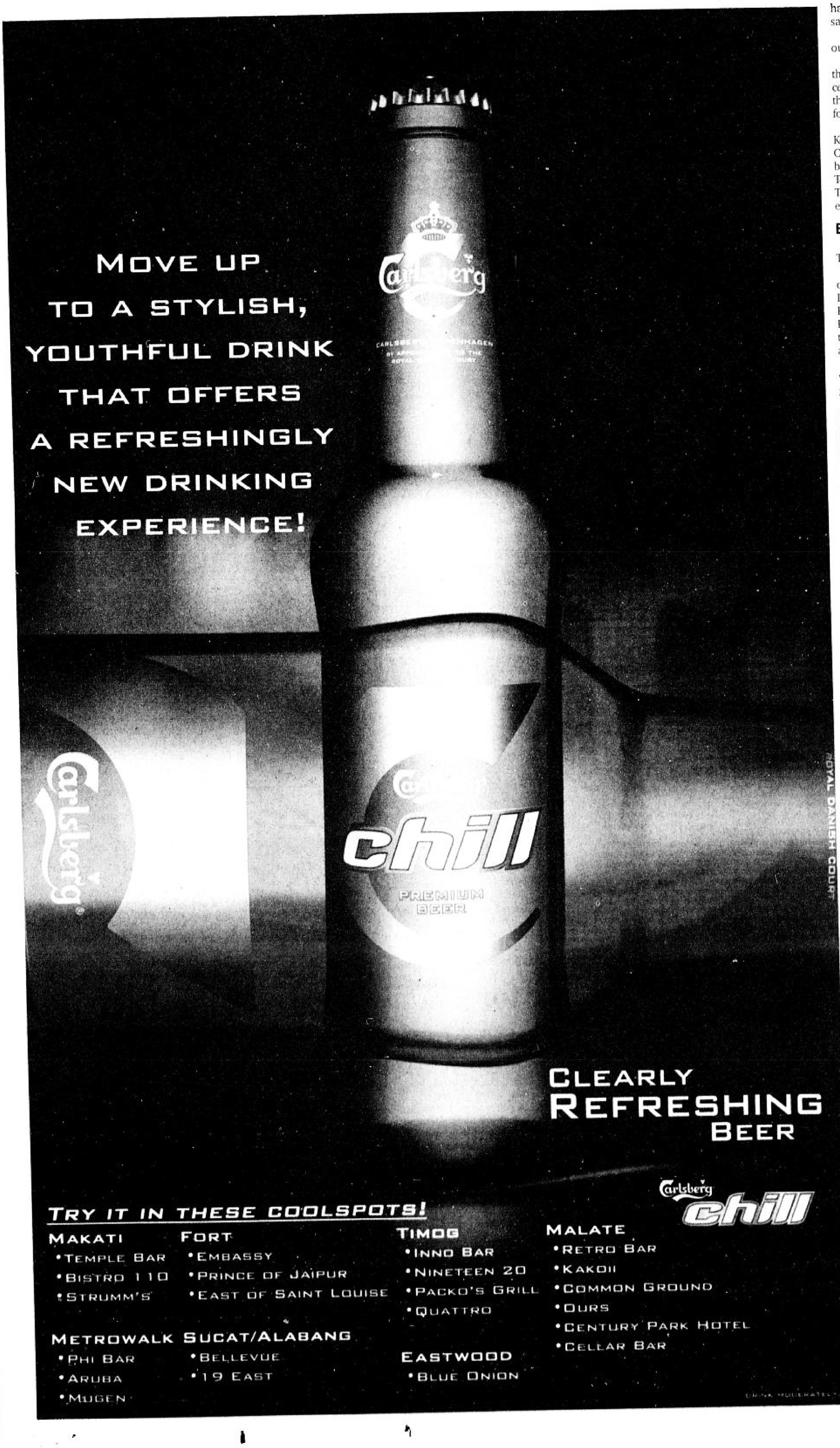

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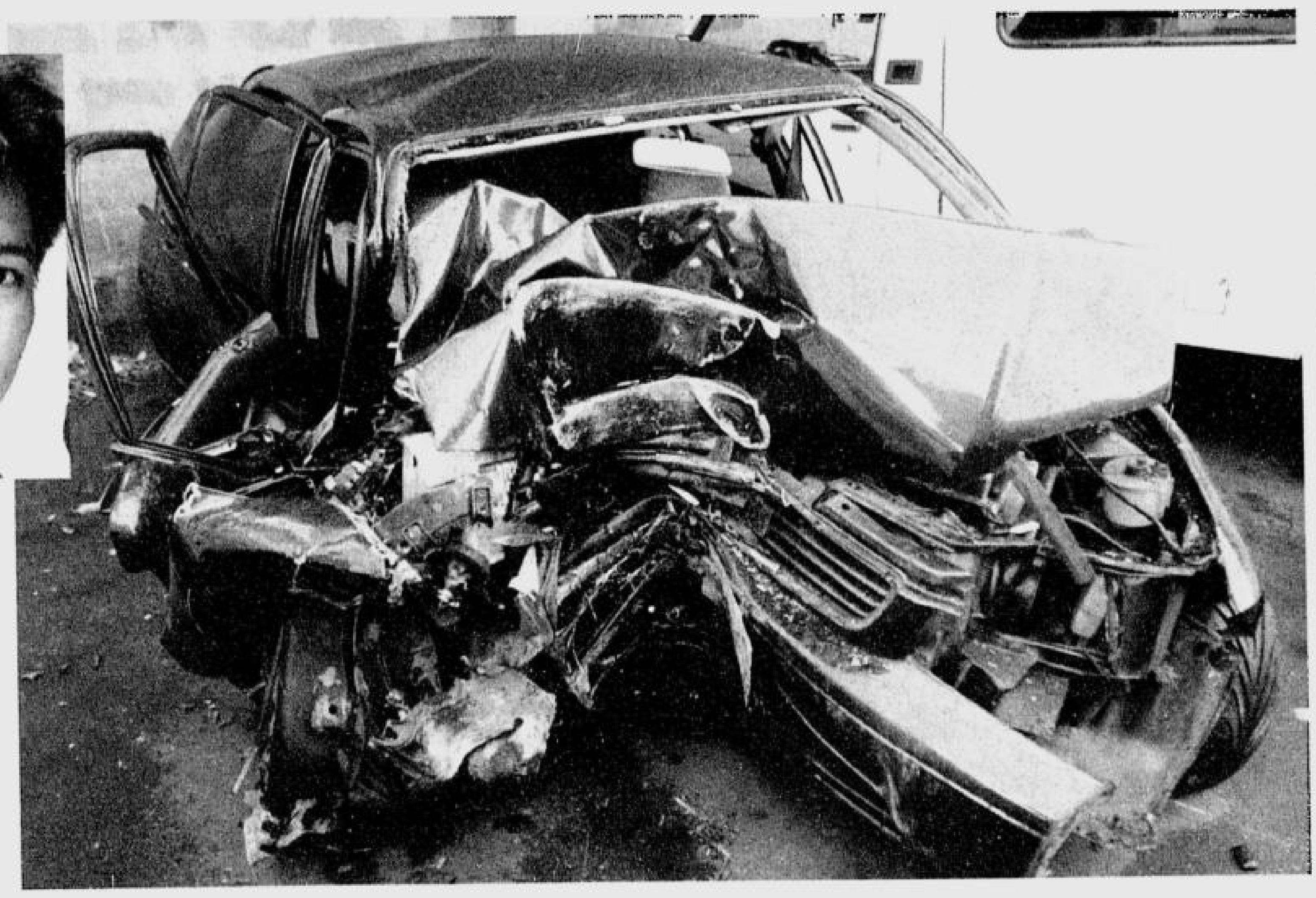

THE CAR of Denver Razon, son of singer Darius Razon (above), is a wreck after being sideswiped by a truck which sped off after the accident. The younger Razon, who used to appear in the teen show "That's Entertainment," which featured popular young stars in the 90s, was killed instantly while his companion remained under observation.
RAFFY LERMA

Singer's son killed in mishap

Car accident claims Darius Razon's last child

By DJ Yap

FOURTEEN YEARS AFTER HE LOST HIS daughter to a fire, balladeer and former Mandaluyong City Councilor Darius Razon lost his remaining child in a traffic accident.

Razon's eldest son, Denver, 29, a businessman, was killed in a hit-and-run incident involving a 10-wheeler truck in Quezon City early yesterday morning.

The younger Razon was on board a Honda City (plate number WAJ-920) being driven by his friend Marian Bustillos, 23, along G. Araneta Avenue at 1:36 a.m. when the car was sideswiped by a truck, police said.

The impact sent the sedan slamming into an electric post and the steel gate of the Alob-Alob Restaurant at the corner of Palanza Street, according to a report by PO3 Perlito Datu of Quezon City Traffic Sector IV.

Instead of stopping, the unidentified trucker kept driving, police said. Witnesses, however, were able to take note of the truck's plate number which was PLY-753.

Razon was rushed to the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Hospital, but he died before reaching the hospital.

Bustillos, on the other hand, was taken to Lourdes Hospital, where she is still confined.

In 1992, the elder Razon lost his teenage daughter when a fire ate up his house in Mandaluyong City, as he was waiting for election results that would earn him his first of two terms as city councilor.

Murder of undercover policeman solved

By Luige del Puerto

THE MURDER OF AN UNDERCOVER agent by members of an alleged drug ring nearly two years ago has been solved with the arrest of a primary suspect, police said yesterday.

Prior to Tuesday's arrest of George Apruebo in a house in Parañaque City, two suspects in the killing of PO3 Cornelio Ramel were already in jail on drug-related charges while two others had died last year, police said.

Police Supt. Arnold Aguilar of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force said Ramel had been working under cover to bust the drug ring in southern Metro Manila when his body was found in an abandoned market in Parañaque on May 5, 2004.

Apart from Apruebo, police identified Ramel's other alleged killers as Jerry Solis and Edgardo Marquez, both of whom had been arrested earlier on drug charges. The two deceased suspects were identified as Rizal Cuenca and Manuel Barreto.

"(They) were engaged in drug trafficking and gun-running activities," said a police statement. "Investigation indicated that P03 Cornelio Ramel stumbled upon the group and learned about their criminal activities."

However, Ramel's true identity was discovered and he was killed, the statement added. It said Ramel's body was doused with muriatic acid, stuffed into a trash bag and hidden in the attic of an abandoned market.

A policeman linked to the killing, SPO1 Napoleon Cuerasma, was cleared for lack of evidence, police said.

"We consider this murder solved. The case is closed," said Aguilar.

Ramel is survived by his wife, Lorna, and two daughters aged 10 and 9.

No way out; 'last best hope'

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.,
Jocelyn R. Uy,
Nancy C. Carvajal,
Tarra V. Quismundo
and Tina G. Santos

SPECIAL REPORT
Project Editor
Recah Trinidad

(This is the second installment of a two-part series on illegal money lenders–Ed.)

THEY PLY AN ILLEGAL TRADE. They charge excessive rates. But their clients claim they are "the last best hope."

Witness an ordinary daily scene in most streets in the metropolis: Indian nationals, usually on board motorcycles, wearing long-sleeved shirts, dropping by homes, knocking on doors, visiting *sari-sari* stores, bakeries and barbershops, collecting daily payments for their money-lending business.

For many, these moneylenders take advantage of people in dire need of cash. But for some, they provide immediate and accessible help to those starting a small business or those who are cash-strapped, without having to go through a tedious process common in lending firms and banks.

For their countrymen, they are industrious individuals, who brave the heat and in going around houses of their borrowers, exposing themselves to dishonest clients or even robbers, just to earn a living.

Take it from 26-year-old AJ Singh, an Indian national who grew up in the country and inherited a money-lending company from his father. "Our father managed to raise our family through this business," he

NO WAY/ A18

PLASTIC WOMAN
Plastic sacks are laid out under the sun to dry in Payatas, Quezon City. The sacks are later sold to junk shops dealing with recycled products. FREDDIE DIONISIO/CONTRIBUTOR

Gonzalez is his own man

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE ARREST AND DETENTION of Linggoy Alcuaz, one of President Macapagal-Arroyo's arch critics, was bad for GMA's image.

She needed it like a hole in the head.

Alcuaz is charged with malversation of public funds before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

He was arrested based on a warrant of arrest issued by the court.

But the police could have put off Alcuaz's arrest much later, not at this time when the President is receiving brickbats from all sides.

One wonders whether or not somebody from inside her camp is sabotaging GMA.

* * *

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez may be a loyal follower of the President, but he is his own man.

Gonzalez said the other day in Cebu City the recent series of INQUIRER articles on the events lead-

GONZALEZ/ A18

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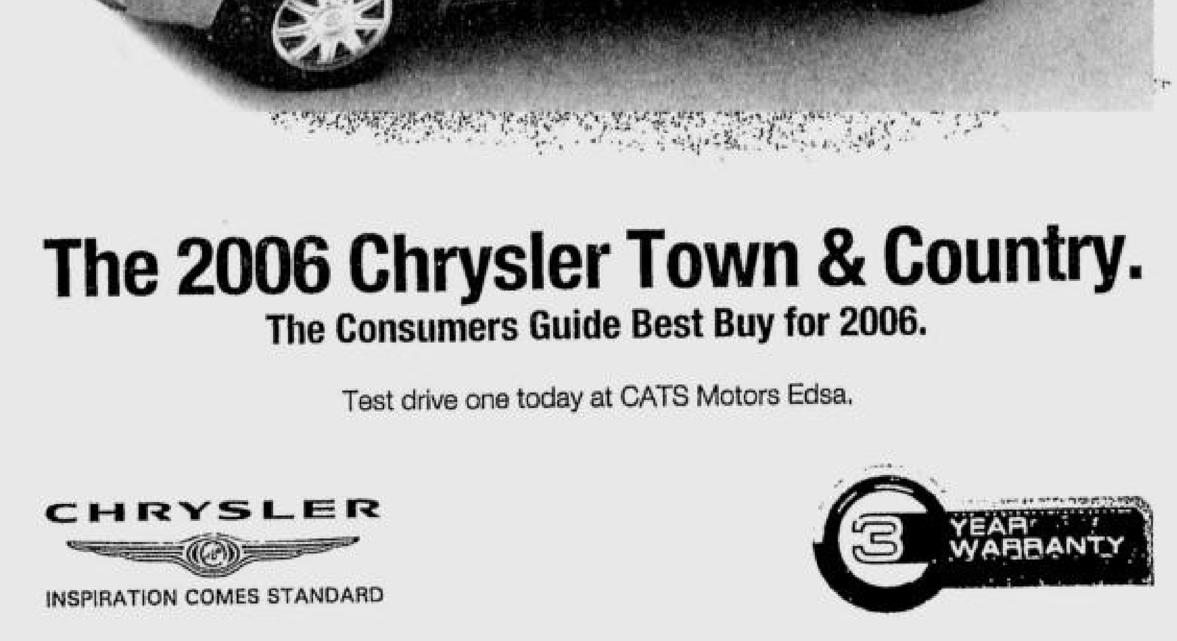

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30 agents, probers join NBI

By Tina G. Santos

THIRTY NEW AGENTS AND SPECIAL investigators have been added to the roster of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

According to NBI officer in charge Nestor Mantaring, the new recruits graduated last Friday after undergoing the basic training course.

He added that the additional manpower will augment the dwindling NBI personnel.

"There is a shortage in manpower because of difficulty in recruitment," Mantaring said, adding that those willing to join the agency have to go through strict screening.

The NBI official added that he is just waiting for the special order or recommendation from the NBI Directorate Staff before the new recruits can be deployed to different divisions.

There have been suggestions to assign the new graduates to the Intelligence Service Division under lawyer Edmund Arugay or to divide them among the investigation division and regional offices.

Of the 30 new recruits, eight (three lawyers and five certified public accountants) were designated as agents while the rest, college graduates of different college courses, were appointed as special investigators.

Mantaring added that only lawyers and CPAs are qualified to become NBI agents.

"Right now, there are more special investigators than lawyers in the investigative and intelligence units," he said.

NBI sources attributed the dwindling number of lawyers in the bureau to the less than attractive pay being offered by the bureau.

FRENCH Ambassador Gerard Chesnel holds a child, one of several rescued from Manila's mean streets. Mayor Lito Atienza (partly hidden, right) and Chesnel were at yesterday's opening of the temporary shelter for homeless families in the city, a project of the French government.

PDI PHOTO / RODEL ROTONI

France connects with homeless

By Tina G. Santos

THE MANILA GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY opened a temporary shelter for homeless people, among them children, who had been rescued from the city's streets.

Funding for its construction came from the French government and was channeled through the Virlanie Foundation.

The shelter can accommodate 100 people. It has 25 double-deck beds and a wash area.

Among those who attended the inauguration were city officials led by Mayor Lito Atienza and French Ambassador Gerard Chesnel.

"The children do not belong to the streets. They have to be given proper care, sustenance and education and this is what we continuously strive to provide," Atienza said.

The new facility—an extension of the city's Reception and Action Center (RAC) on Arroceros Street—was built to accommodate disadvantaged persons in the city and improve the services being provided by RAC for its beneficiaries.

The RAC is an auxiliary organization of the Manila Department of Social Welfare and the Manila Police District that serves as a temporary home and clearing house for street children, mendicants, vagrants, wayward youth, old people who have been abandoned or neglected and abused or stranded persons in the city.

It also provides social, administrative, dietary and medical services to about 500 people, including babies and the elderly.

St. Paul 'adopts' St. Andrew's graduating students

By Jocelyn R. Uy

GRADUATING STUDENTS OF ST. ANdrew's School in Parañaque City, which has been closed since Feb. 20 due to an incident of mercury exposure, returned to the classroom on Tuesday.

The classes for the students, however, were not held in the school, which remains closed, but in St. Paul's College, which is just a few meters away from St. Andrew's.

"They are going to take their periodical test on April 1," Estrellita Nery, the principal of St. Andrew's, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Meanwhile, other students are on a home-study program, which began two weeks ago. Every Monday, the students go to the St. Andrew's Parish Church to get their learning worksheets that contain one week's worth of lessons and activities, said Nery.

"They also return the modules every Monday. We will be having this kind of learning exercises until the school reopens," she added.

Once health officials declare the school safe for reopening, teachers will go over the worksheets together with the students, Nery said.

According to Dr. Eric Tayag, director of the National Epidemiology Center, the mercury level in the school has remained high.

Post-test results showed the mercury level as being above the threshold of two micrograms/cubic meter which is considered toxic to humans, Tayag added.

School officials declared a holiday beginning on Feb. 20 after 11 students were hospitalized for symptoms of mercury exposure following a class experiment on Feb. 16.

Thirteen students were hospitalized at the Philippine General Hospital after they came down with symptoms of mercury exposure. They were later released although one remained at the hospital for further observation.

Health officials said it would take about three to six months before the students, teachers and staffers could be given a clean bill of health.

Gonzalez is his own man

From page A17

ing up to the aborted coup on Feb. 24 was neither seditious nor libelous.

The justice secretary's statement contradicts the stand of the Armed Forces of the Philippines that the articles in question were libelous and seditious.

So, even if the military makes good its threat to file sedition and libel charges against this newspaper, who will file those cases for them?

The cases, if they are to be filed at all, will have to undergo preliminary investigation by a fiscal (prosecutor).

The prosecutor is under the supervision of the secretary of justice.

And since the DOJ chief said the articles were neither libelous nor seditious, can the prosecutor overrule his boss and file a case in court?

* * *

Neophyte Sen. Jamby Madrigal should not have crossed swords with the elderly Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile on the Senate floor.

It was a mismatch.

JPE is an intellectual giant while Jamby is a pygmy.

Next time Jamby should pick a fight with somebody her size.

The JPE-Jamby fight proves once again the truism that those who live in glass houses should never throw stones.

* * *

A bidding for the job of housekeeping at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2 should be done again.

This is to preclude suspicions that the bids and awards committee (BAC) was biased against one of the participants.

Mercury Dual Line Corp., which was disqualified from the bidding, said the BAC chair showed partiality toward PRC Manpower System, although the firm was not able to submit the required tax clearance certificate.

The BAC chair claimed Mercury failed to submit the required mayor's permit.

But the firm insisted it had the permit.

Mercury said that somebody at the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) legal department removed all the certified true copies of the mayor's permit from all four sets of Mercury's submission papers.

If Mercury's accusation is true, the bidding was *lutong macao* or already a done deal in favor of whoever won.

No way out; 'last best hope'

From page A17

said in fluent Filipino.

His father initially used to pick up payments from homes of close friends who became his first clients. Singh now collects weekly, some payments even come in the form of post-dated checks. The company is also registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Since relatives and friends who have lived here for several years were already into money-lending, many in the next wave of migrants also went into the same business.

Borrowers were charged a 20-percent interest through a scheme that became popularly known as "5-6." For example, a P5,000 loan would be eventually repaid as P6,000. Payments are made daily for 40-60 days. Borrowers can pay bigger daily payments and shorten the span of the loan, but the interest rate would not change. There is no paper work required, just a notebook to list daily payments that are picked up in clients' homes or stalls.

Lifesavers

Michael, 25, who works in a barbershop in Mandaluyong City and has been turning to Indian nationals for loans in the last two years, said money-lenders are lifesavers. But they could also be annoying sometimes, he added.

"There are lenders who are very considerate. But there are also many who are ill-mannered," he said. "Some lenders go around early in the morning, with the doors barely open for business.

There are also those who curse borrowers who do not pay on time, said Betty, a flower vendor. "Business is slow sometimes, but some lenders do not understand this," she said.

But there are also stories of borrowers running away from their obligations.

Though he himself lost P200,000 when a borrower fled, Singh still believes most Filipinos are honest. His friends were also victims of street robbers, but he said "this is part of the business."

Competition is growing, but not only between Indian Nationals who have chosen to settle in the country. Filipino lenders have copied the daily payment and interest scheme of the Indians, said Michael. "We welcome those who have followed our style. They are now finding out for themselves that this is a good business," Singh said.

Heroes

For most market vendors, the "Bumbays" are heroes who come through in the worst of times. Lilia Castillo, who has been in the food-catering business since 1985 in Pasay City, said she wouldn't have lasted long, if not for the "5-6" lending scheme.

"If you pay your loan on time, they even lend you double the usual amount the next time around," Castillo said, adding that it was even easier to borrow from Indians than from fellow Filipinos.

"When you tell the Indians you can't pay today, they will just drive off to another borrower without making you pay double the next day," she said. "And if you need money tomorrow, they will really come back and give you the money the next day."

Erlinda Magudayao, who sells cooked food in Caloocan City, said the interest she pays remains the same since she became a borrower 23 years ago. Filipino lenders, apart from being rude, also jack up the interest rate if you fail to remit your daily payment, she added.

According to Alice Reyes of Barangay Pio Del Pilar, Makati City, Indian lenders are more reliable than any other capital assistance program, with no papers to process, just the promise of honoring one's word.

"I had nowhere else to get the capital because there's no one else in the family working and my husband had passed on," said Reyes, a single mother with two children.

Up against the wall

A 45-year-old Indian national who has been residing and doing business in the country for more than 20 years now, said the number of his clients continues to increase through the years. He said this could be because he offers flexible, collateral-free loans.

"My terms and conditions are simple," he said. "I think that's basically what people want." Apart from cash, he offers various items, from umbrellas to blankets, cell phones and home appliances.

Up against the wall, with no one in their dear motherland to rescue them, poor Filipinos are forced to embrace their "last best hope," even if many turn out to be selfish, cheating money lenders.

Vehicle registrations hike LTO revenues to ₱9.6B in 2005

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) has reported an increase in revenue collections last year, due mainly to the continued rise in motor vehicle registrations in the country, particularly Metro Manila.

Based on the agency's records, it collected a total of P9.62 billion in 2005, up by 3.58 percent over the P9.26 billion collected during the previous year.

This made the LTO the third largest revenue earner for the government, next to the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs.

The bulk of the increase came from a P339-million hike in motor vehicle user's fees collected by the agency, from P6.88 billion in 2004 to P7.22 billion last year.

According to the LTO, there are 5.06 million motor vehicles registered in the country as of 2005, up by 6.28 percent from the 4.76 million reported at the end of the previous year.

The National Capital Region has the most number of registered vehicles with 1.58 million plying Metro Manila's roads while the region which registered the highest increase, percentage wise, was Region 9 or Western Mindanao. The number of registered vehicles in the area rose to 148,698 units last year, up by 13.46 percent.

According to the LTO, it collected a total of P283.4 million in fines in 2005, representing a 6-percent increase from the P267.4 million collected in the previous year. Most of those who were fined had violated the Clear Air Act or were apprehended for smoke belching or had forgotten to use seatbelts.

A 21.45 percent increase in collections for seatbelt use violations was reported last year. All told, motorists across the country paid P40.2 million for failing to wear seatbelts while driving.

Collections from smoke belchers, on the other hand, declined to P26.7 million, down by 33 percent.

METROBRIEFS

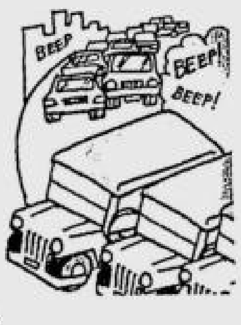
Three hurt in mishap

THREE PERSONS, including a former mayor, were injured when their car slammed into the back of a 10-wheeler truck along the North Luzon Expressway at dawn yesterday. NLEx traffic supervisor Jong Sapiera identified the victims as Leonardo Velasco, 74, former mayor of Bacarra, Ilocos Norte; Rose Velasco, 55 and Joseph Sotto, 45. Sapiera said the three were on board a Honda City (WHA 471) when the car hit the truck in front along Kilometer 11, near the Balintawak interchange. The victims were brought to the Manila Central University hospital in Caloocan City for treatment. The driver of the truck and his two companions, on the other hand, were not hurt in the incident. ***Nancy C. Carvajal***

Korean trader found dead

A 45-YEAR-OLD Korean businessman was found dead inside his sports utility vehicle in Paco, Manila, on Monday night. The victim was identified as Ku Kug Jin, a resident of Patag St. in BF Homes Parañaque. Police said Ku, who reportedly owned the Full House Resort in Anilao, Batangas, and wrote for a Korean newspaper in Parañaque City, had been shot three times in the chest. His body was found inside his Ford Escape van (XNH-233). SPO3 Diomedes Labarda of the Manila Police District Homicide Section said the victim left his house at around 2 a.m. Monday after talking to "an English-speaking person" on the phone. A scavenger contacted the police after noticing the foul odor coming from the victim's vehicle which was parked on General Luna St., Paco. Labarda said they were still in the process of identifying the suspects. ***Margaux C. Ortiz***

Drivers stage protest


BEEP
BEEP!
BEEP!

TRAFFIC was snarled along the Bonifacio Monument circle for almost three hours yesterday when nearly 50 jeepney drivers plying the Sangandaan to Malabon route and vice versa parked their vehicles on the road. The drivers stopped plying their routes starting at 7 a.m. to protest the operation of *colorum* (illegal) jeepneys which they said has affected their earnings. The protest action affected hundreds of passengers bound for Malabon and Sangandaan. The drivers voluntarily dispersed three hours later after Senior Insp. Abner Castro, head of the Traffic Management Group, and Jun Nicol of the Department of Public Safety and Traffic Management held a dialogue with them and promised to look into the matter. ***Nancy C. Carvajal***

Police watching warehouse

THE POLICE have started keeping watch over a chemical warehouse in Pasay City which residents claimed has been operating illegally. Wilfred Ortaliz, chief of Barangay 12, Zone 4, where Chase Chemical Trading is located, sought police assistance on Tuesday night after he other residents allegedly saw men unloading several bags of chemicals from a 40-foot trailer van, P03 Alberto Sambilon said. Ortaliz told the police that he has not issued a license to Ben Tio, the warehouse owner, to operate in the barangay. After a check with City Hall, police discovered that Tio was not given a mayor's permit and license to operate in a residential zone. . ***Jocelyn R. Uy***

FREE COMPUTER COURSES
Manila Vice Mayor Danilo Lacuna led the ribbon cutting ceremony during the recent inauguration of the Dennis H. Lacuna Computer Center in Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila. Residents of District 6 in Manila can avail of free computer courses at the center.

DAREA

DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

IN UNITY WE DERIVE OUR STRENGTH

MANISFESTATION OF SUPPORT

in behalf of the regular appointment of

HONORABLE DATU NASSER C. PANGANDAMAN, AL HAJ

as Secretary of The Department of Agrarian Reform

HONORABLE NARCISO B. NIETO

as Undersecretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform

WHEREAS, an era in governance under serious turmoil occurred very recently;

WHEREAS, time and again, the Department of Agrarian Reform has become the common center stage where sentiments on agrarian reform and other relevant issues and disputes are openly ventilated;

WHEREAS, the Department of Agrarian Reform, under the intelligent stewardship of a high caliber manager, in the person of Honorable Datu Nasser C. Pangandaman, Al Haj, have been able to surmount all forms of crises, amidst prevailing economic, political and social uncertainties;

WHEREAS, Honorable Nasser C. Pangandaman, who is the incumbent Officer-In-Charge of the Department of Agrarian Reform and Honorable Narciso B. Nieto, the present Acting Undersecretary for Field Operations, has conspicuously demonstrated **dexterity** in managing public affairs; **prudence** in the disposition of multifarious concerns; **fairness and equitability** in resolving conflicts; wisdom by instilling discipline, harmony and propagating high morale among his constituencies in the Department; **effectiveness** of his programs; **efficiency** in implementing the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program; **compassion** for the underprivileged and marginal sector of society; **dedication** to public service; and, particularly, his **unwavering loyalty** to the Constitution and the present dispensation under Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

WHEREAS, Honorable Nasser C. Pangandaman, who rose from a prominent, decent, and esteemed family in Mindanao, gained respect among his peers and clients not only for his heritage, but more particularly for his sterling record in public service;

WHEREAS, Honorable Narciso B. Nieto, considered by his peers as an institution in the areas of Rural Development and Urban Planning having rose from the ranks started as Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer for 9 years, Chief Agrarian Reform Program Officer for 4 years, Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer for 2 years, Assistant Regional Director for Operations for 2 years, and Regional Director for 6 years.

WHEREAS, Honorable Narciso B. Nieto, is a consistent excellent performer in the area of Land Acquisition and Distribution having been a recipient of the Undersecretary's Award for Outstanding Regional Director in 1999, twice Outstanding PARO in 1994 and 1995 and Outstanding MARO in 1989;

WHEREAS, bequeathed with exemplary qualifications coupled by their unparalleled accomplishments, vision for the successful implementation of a genuine agrarian reform throughout the country, and unyielding philosophy to serve, Honorable Nasser C. Pangandaman and Honorable Narciso B. Nieto, possess the qualities that will catapult DAR into greater heights;

WHEREAS, we see the foregoing merits as sufficient to warrant the appointment of Honorable Nasser C. Pangandaman as Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform and Honorable Narciso B. Nieto as Undersecretary for the Department of Agrarian Reform;

WHEREAS, to substantiate President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's goal for a strong Republic, the total emancipation of the marginal sector of society from the clutches of feudalism, as originally envisioned by no less than the President's father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, and to waive, for one moment and for the first time, the helm of direct management and supervision over the affairs of the Department of Agrarian Reform,

THIS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Which is composed of the National, Regional, and Provincial Executive Officers of the DAR Employees Association (DAREA), Representatives of the different Bureaus and Offices in the Department of Agrarian Reform

DO HEREBY PROCLAIM AND MANIFEST ITS STRONG RECOMMENDATION AND OVERWHELMING SUPPORT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF

HONORABLE DATU NASSER C. PANGANDAMAN, AL HAJ

AS SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM

And

HONORABLE NARCISO B. NIETO

AS UNDERSECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM

And to let this MANIFESTO be known to all people in this land.

Done this 10th day of March 2006 in Tagaytay City, Philippines.

FERDINAND M. DE GALA	REGION IV-B
JOEL L. J. DABAL	OR. MINDORO
Ma. Socorro C. [illegible]	Region IX
[illegible]	Reg. IX ZSP
ANNE ANDRESITA V. [illegible]	Reg. IX Zambo. Norte
RAIMUND A. [illegible]	REG. IX, ZAMBO. SUR
JULIUS WANE R. GRAPA	REG VII, OR. NEG
[illegible] D. [illegible]	REGION VII - BOHOL
LUISA LOIDA B. ENOLPE	REGION VII - Reg. Office
Jennett R. Opena	Cebu - Region VII
ANTONIO T. ALCAIN	REGIONAL OFFICE N. I
ESTERLI S. NAVARRO	ILOCOS SUR - REG. I
Winiefred Pepe B. [illegible]	REG I - ILOCOS NORTE
DOROTHY C. BAUTISTA	REGION I RO
ROSMIN F. REYES	DARPO - LA UNION
EUGENE NARZAN	DARPO - Pangasinan
CESAR V. BAUTISTA	DARPO - N. VIZCAYA
LAPAZ N. CABAL	DAR Bukidnon
EMELITA A. MAYOL	DAR - N. COTABATO
LUZ B. [illegible]	DAR SULTAN KUDARAT
BONIFACIO G. [illegible]	DAR - [illegible]
[illegible] ARENAS	DARPO QUEZON I
Kenneth Martinez	DARPO - RIZAL
Raul I. [illegible]	DAR Davao City
TOMMY [illegible]	DAR XI
RAFAEL G. FLORES	DAR Basilan
AMPARO. R.I.	DARPO - DDO. OR
FRANKLIN B GONGORA	DARPO - SO. COT. R-XII
Tito D. Arellano	DAR. Davao del Sur
MARIANO [illegible]	DAR - [illegible]
RAYMOND P. TAMARAY	DARPO - CAGAYAN
FELIPE C. RANOCO	DARPO ARMM
Evangeline G. Hangiran	DARPO - Caraga
Glenn L. Auza	DARPO - Surigao del Sur
Agnes L. [illegible]	DARPO - Agusan del Norte
JOSIE N. NEDAMO	DARPO - SARANGANI
[illegible]	DARPO - Mis. OR.
WILLIADO M ROSAL	DARPO [illegible]
[illegible]	DARPO - [illegible]
NICOLAS R POMIDA, Jr.	DARRO 08, Tac. City
ANWAR D. [illegible]	DARRO 12, Cot. City
Aquilino A. [illegible]	DARRO - 10
Carlos F. [illegible]	DAR - BUKIDNON
Avelina R. [illegible]	DAR. Camiguin
JONI C SIMEON	DARRO - CAR
Edna S. [illegible]	DARPO Mis. Occ.
[illegible]	[illegible] DARPO LDN.
[illegible]	DAR MASBATE
[illegible] C. [illegible]	DAR - Cebu
Yolanda D. [illegible]	DAR Ifugao
[illegible] F. [illegible]	Kalinga
[illegible] BOKING	DAR - MT. PROVINCE
Ferdinand W. [illegible]	DAR - Benguet
REBECCA E. [illegible]	DARPO - MAG.
DANILO G. [illegible]	DARPO [illegible]
ROMMEL S. ORTIZ	DAR - SORSOGON
C. JAIME M. MENDOZA	DARPO - ROMBLON
JOSELINE E. [illegible]	DARPO Guimaras
IDA L. [illegible]	DARPO Iloilo
ANGELITA P MAGRARE	DARPO - ANTIQUE
[illegible]	[illegible]
MERISSA B ALDEA	DARPO. CATANDUANES
JOCYLENE NAZ	DAR RO - 5
KOEL F FLAMIANO	DARPO - CAPIZ
REGINALDO M. FALCONITE	BILIRAN
DIOSCORO C. DEVEYRA	DAR - LEYTE
MA. CORAZON R. QUIOZON	DAR - CAMS. NORTE R-V
MELODY A RAMOS	DAR - Albay
[illegible] S. PAZ	DAR CAVITE
ADELYN M. [illegible]	DAR - OCC. MIN.
AURORA L. QUERUBIN	DAR - [illegible]
ELVIRA A. [illegible]	DARO - LAGUNA
ROMEO J VERA CRUZ	DARPO - [illegible]
S.B. [illegible]	DARPO TARLAC
[illegible] L. [illegible]	DAR South Nueva Ecija
GLICERIA S. PRUDENCIADO	DAR - Pampanga
ARTEMIO S. TUMACRUZ, JR	DAR - Bulacan
DANILO B MINA	DAR - North N. Ecija
Mateo P. [illegible]	DAR - Aurora
[illegible] I. Ocampo	DARRO - 3
[illegible]	[illegible]
NENA A. [illegible]	DARPO - PALAWAN
[illegible] C. [illegible]	DAR Marinduque
Helen B. [illegible]	DAR - Abra
[illegible] C. [illegible]	DAR [illegible]
ANISA S. KADIR	DAR, LANAO DEL SUR
MERIEL M. ALFONSO	DAR, BATAAN
[illegible]	DAR - [illegible] R-03
LUMBARDA S. [illegible]	DARRO - 2
[illegible] J. VALDEZ	DARCO
[illegible]	DARCO
[illegible]	BARC
OFELIA E. [illegible]	DARAB
PEDRO S. MERCADO	G.S.D DARCO
ROBERTO L. PILAPIL	DARCO
ERLINDA C. [illegible]	DARCO
Salvacion J. [illegible]	DARCO
[illegible]	DAR - [illegible]
Gloria P. Almazan	DARCO

ATTEST:

Convention Secretary

Antonia M Pascual
DAREA National President

DAR Management

ADVT

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Thaksin may step down but only temporarily

BANGKOK—THAKSIN SHINAWATRA SAID Wednesday that he would consider stepping down temporarily as Thailand's prime minister, after weeks of raucous demonstrations accusing him of corruption and demanding his resignation.

Thaksin did not elaborate on when, and for how long, he would consider stepping down.

He made his comments in northeastern Thailand while campaigning for snap elections he has called for April 2 in hopes of refreshing his mandate and deflating the country's growing anti-government movement.

Critics have suggested that Thaksin step aside before the snap polls and appoint a neutral replacement to oversee proposed reforms to the constitution, a move that would help defuse growing protests.

When asked by a reporter what he thought of stepping aside, he said: "It is a good proposal, and I am considering this."

Thaksin's statements came amid speculation that he already has designated a replacement, Deputy Prime Minister Chitchai Wannasathit, who on Tuesday was unexpectedly promoted to the No. 2 position in the Cabinet and charged with security affairs. Chitchai is a longtime, trusted associate of the Thai leader.

"This does not mean that I would bow to mob rule. I have to take some time to consider and decide what to do, because I have a duty to complete my mission," he told reporters during a campaign tour in the northeastern province of Buriram.

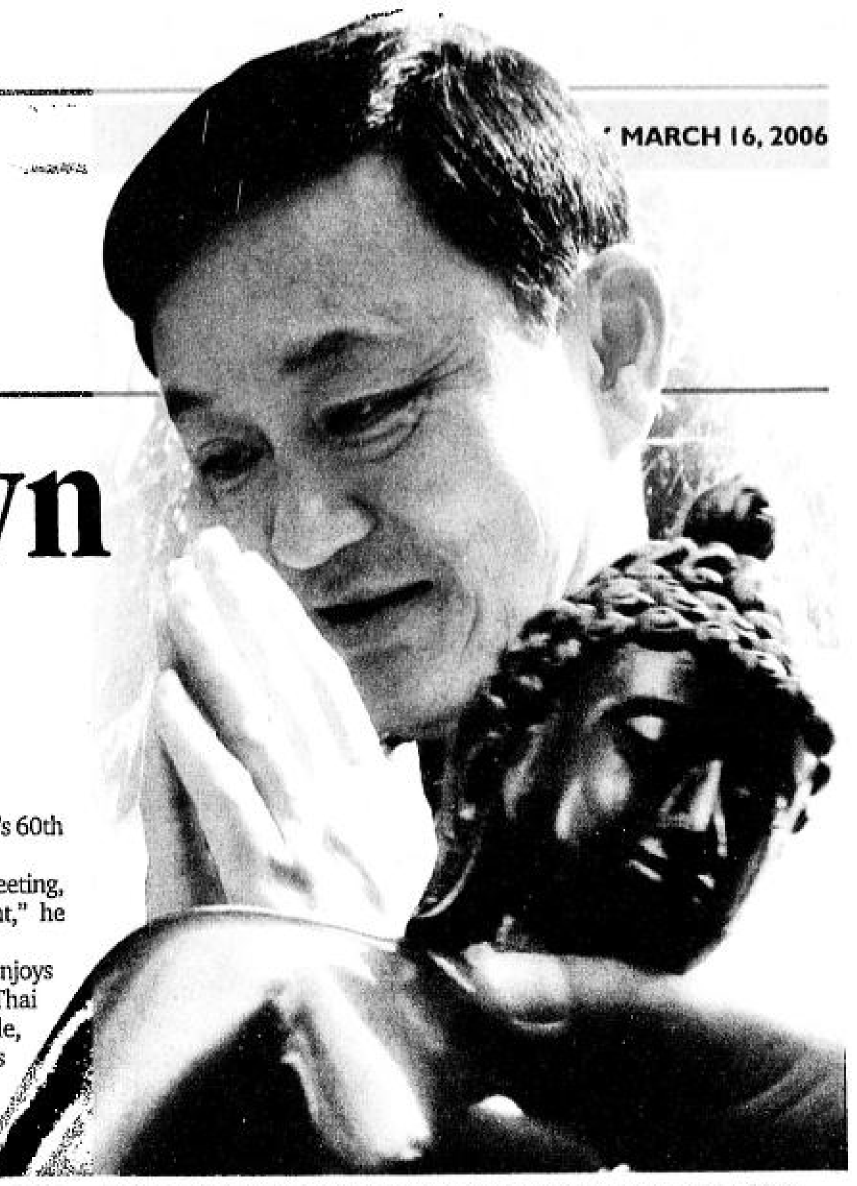
He indicated that change was not imminent, saying he planned to return to his office in Bangkok on Thursday to chair a planning session for celebrations this summer for King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 60th anniversary on the throne.

"I have to attend the meeting, because it is very important," he said.

The prime minister still enjoys solid support from the rural Thai majority in the countryside, despite the growing protests led by the urban elite in Bangkok.

Critics accuse the tycoon-turned-politician of corruption, mishandling a Muslim insurgency in the south, stifling the media and allowing family members and cronies to gain from state policies.

Tens of thousands of protesters gathered Tuesday near Thaksin's office in Bangkok and camped out overnight, vowing to stay until he resigns, in the latest mass demonstration in recent weeks. The demonstrators suspended their vigil early Wednesday with plans to reconvene in the evening. *AP*



THAILAND'S Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra prays in Nakhon Ratchasima province, about 250 km east of Bangkok, March 15. REUTERS

UN to tackle Iran nuke crisis Friday

UNITED NATIONS—THE UN SECURITY Council on Tuesday agreed to hold a first formal meeting on the Iranian nuclear crisis Friday amid continuing wrangling over a draft statement urging Tehran to suspend uranium enrichment.

The council's five permanent members—Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States—held an informal session with their 10 non-permanent colleagues to discuss elements of a Franco-British draft text on the issue. Diplomats said council members agreed to meet again informally on Thursday and formally on Friday.

Their meeting followed an informal gathering of the so-called Perm-5 earlier Tuesday that sought to bridge differences over a proposed council statement on Iran, suspected by the West of seeking a covert nuclear weapons capability.

The text, among other things, calls on Iran to comply with demands set by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), including restoring full and sustained suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities.

Iran is also asked "to take the steps needed to begin building confidence in establishing the exclusively peaceful purpose of its nuclear program." *AFP*

FESTIVAL OF COLORS

A girl and a child look on with color smeared on their faces, as they celebrate Holi, the Hindu festival of colors, in Allahabad, India, March 15. This exuberant festival originally held to celebrate the fertility of the land, is also associated with the immortal love of Hindu God Krishna and Radha. AP

Sectarian strife in Iraq escalates

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—THE BODIES OF MORE than 85 executed men have surfaced across Baghdad in the past two days, in Sunni and Shiite neighborhoods, providing more graphic proof of sectarian strife and spiraling lawlessness.

Many bodies bore marks of torture—badly beaten faces, gagged mouths, rope burns around the neck—though it remains unclear who is responsible.

The wave of killings has called into question the US government's statements that Iraqi security forces can reverse the slide toward chaos. Less than a month after an assault on a Shiite shrine nearly plunged Iraq into all-out civil war, the blood continues to flow, just as freely.

Many of the street executions happened in the same areas where Shiite militia men rampaged in the days after the shrine attack, suggesting that no one is able, or willing, to stop them.

"We blame the government, entirely," said Daffar al-Ani, a spokesperson for the Iraqi Consensus Front, one of bigger Sunni political parties. "These hangings, these killings in the night, they have the signature of police commandos."

On Tuesday morning, police recruits sank their shovels into a shallow grave alongside a highway and turned up the bodies of 29 unidentified men, bound, blindfolded and shot. *NYT*

Milosevic's body to be flown to Serbia for burial

AMSTERDAM—THE BODY OF Slobodan Milosevic will be flown to Belgrade on Wednesday for burial, almost five years after the former Yugoslav leader was sent to The Hague to stand trial for war crimes.

The remains of Milosevic, who died of a heart attack in jail just months before a verdict, were expected to arrive in Belgrade in the afternoon, but there was no immediate indication when the funeral would take place. Milosevic's lawyer announced the decision for a funeral in the Serbian capital following wrangling between the Serbian government and hardliners over restrictions posed by Belgrade.

Son Marko had said that he would consider a Moscow funeral if it was not safe for his mother to travel to Serbia.

A Serbian court said Milosevic's widow Mira Markovic, who fled to Moscow in 2003 to avoid charges of abuse of power, would not be arrested if she returned home. But she will face a court hearing and her passport will be confiscated, the court said.

Belgrade has refused a state funeral for Milosevic, who ruled for a decade as Yugoslavia imploded in conflict during the 1990s.

The country has turned westwards since Milosevic was overthrown in 2000. His death has increased pressure on Serbia to arrest Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his military commander Ratko Mladic, both accused of genocide by the UN tribunal, as a price of progress on European Union membership.

Milosevic's family has accused the UN tribunal of murdering the former Serb strongman by refusing his request to travel to Russia for medical treatment. *Reuters*

Dan Brown grilled in 'Da Vinci Code' case

LONDON—THE LAWYER REPRESENTING two historians who accuse Dan Brown of copying their work in his bestseller "The Da Vinci Code" told a British court on Tuesday he suspected the author had lied in his evidence.

Brown, in the witness box for a second day, was forced to defend his assertion that he had not read "The Holy Blood, and the Holy Grail" when he came up with the idea for his thriller.

Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, co-authors of the 1982

"Holy Blood" book, who are suing Brown's British publisher Random House, allege that he lifted their ideas wholesale.

Part of Brown's defense has been to say he wrote the synopsis for "The Da Vinci Code," one of the most successful novels with sales of around 40 million copies, before he became familiar with the "Holy Blood" book.

"You acquired a copy of 'Holy Blood, Holy Grail' before you accept in your evidence you did," said the historians' lawyer Jonathan Rayner James. "There are very few dates, let alone exact dates, in your witness statement." Brown, 41, said neither he nor his wife, Blythe, who is also his assistant, had used ideas from the book for his synopsis.

There are seven books listed in the partial bibliography for

"The Da Vinci Code" synopsis, written in January 2001, but "Holy Blood" is not among them.

"That is the clear piece of evidence to me that "Holy Blood, Holy Grail" was not around when I wrote the synopsis," said Brown, adding it would have been in his interest to add the work to his bibliography in order to impress his publisher.

Both books share the idea of Jesus marrying and having a child by Mary Magdalene and their bloodline being protected by the mysterious Priory of Sion, a theory greeted with outrage by some Roman Catholic leaders.

The publicity-shy author was forced to answer questions in the full glare of the world's media for a second day. *Reuters*

Worst ever oil spill in Alaska's North Slope

LOS ANGELES—UP TO ONE million liters of oil have leaked from a damaged pipeline in Alaska's North Slope, the worst spill in the region's history, authorities said Tuesday.

The leak, apparently caused by metal corrosion, was detected March 2 in the United States' largest oil field in Prudhoe Bay, which lies about 1,040 km north of Alaska's biggest city, Anchorage.

In its latest report on the incident, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation estimated that 760,000 to one million liters of oil have spilled into 0.8 hectare of tundra and frozen lake surface.

The previous estimate released last week said 220,000 liters of crude had spewed onto the tundra.

The biggest crude leak on the North Slope until this month's spill had been a 127,500-liter spill in 1989. The extreme cold weather has hampered the cleanup operation, the environmental department said.

"The priorities are still to vacuum up the oil and collecting the contaminated snow, to make sure the tundra is not contaminated," department spokesperson Lynda Giguere told AFP. *AFP*

"Hands off the Buns!"
Imogen Bailey
모피를 입느니
차라리 벌거벗겠다
NO FUR

NUDE PROTEST

Australian model and actress Imogen Bailey poses nude for a new advertisement for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) Asia-Pacific in this undated handout photo. "I'll gladly bare my skin if it will help save animals' skins," said Imogen. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

Thai activist cleared of libel

BANGKOK—A Thai court cleared media activist Supinya Klangnarong on Wednesday of criminal libel of the business empire founded by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Shin Corp.'s civil libel case against Supinya, claiming 400 million baht ($10 million) in compensation for suggesting it was a major beneficiary of government policies, was now likely to be dropped, her lawyer said. "The court ruled that all the defendants were not guilty," a judge said reading the verdict of the Bangkok Criminal Court. Supinya's opinion expressed at a seminar was made in good faith and did not insult Shin Corp., he said. Shin Corp. accused Supinya, 32, of criminal libel, which could have landed her in jail, by suggesting in a 2003 newspaper article that government policies were tailored to benefit the company. *Reuters*

Russia to ship uranium to India

NEW DELHI—India Tuesday said that Russia had agreed to its request to supply uranium for two of its nuclear reactors, a foreign ministry official said. Russia is a member of the 45-member Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) that controls trade in atomic fuel, which has long been denied to India after it conducted nuclear tests and refused to join the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. The official said Russia had informed the NSG of its decision to supply fuel for the reactors at Tarapur in western Maharashtra state. "To India's request, Russia has agreed to supply a limited amount of uranium fuel for the safeguarded units 1 and 2 of the Tarapur Atomic Power Station," Indian foreign ministry spokesperson Navtej Sarna told reporters in New Delhi. *AFP*

Koizumi visits justified

TOKYO—A Japanese court Wednesday rejected a suit alleging that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's 2004 visit to a Tokyo war shrine violated the constitution, Kyodo News agency reported. Koizumi has visited Yasukuni Shrine five times since taking office in 2001, triggering protests from critics who say the shrine glorifies militarism, and prompting a string of lawsuits. The suit in Matsuyama in western Japan alleged that Koizumi's visit violated the constitutional separation of religion and state. Yasukuni honors Japan's war dead, including executed war criminals. *AP*

US Marines move to Guam

WASHINGTON—The US military will move around 8,000 marines from Okinawa to Guam by 2012 as part of an agreement on the realignment of US forces there, a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday. The number of marines to be relocated is about 1,000 more than the Pentagon originally estimated when it signed an agreement on October 29 with Japan regarding the US military presence in Japan, said Lieutenant Colonel Brian Maka. "Upon further analysis, it looks like ... roughly the number is going to be about 8,000 (marines)," he said. The United States estimates the move will cost around $10 billion, and wants Japan to pick up 75 percent of it, he said. *AFP*

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SPORTS

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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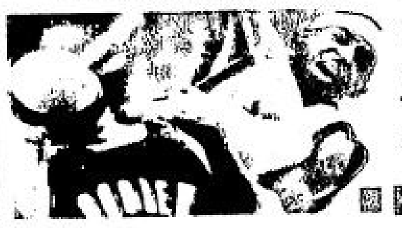


POC okays new cage federation's constitution

By Jasmine W. Payo

ARMED WITH THE BACKING OF THE COUNTRY'S biggest basketball leagues, a new Philippine Olympic Committee-backed federation is ready to submit to the international basketball federation (Fiba) its credentials as the sport's new national association.

And it is ready to do so minus one crucial piece: The fifth stakeholder.

"I have been given full authority by the POC executive board to accept the application of the new organization," POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco declared after yesterday's expanded executive committee meeting.

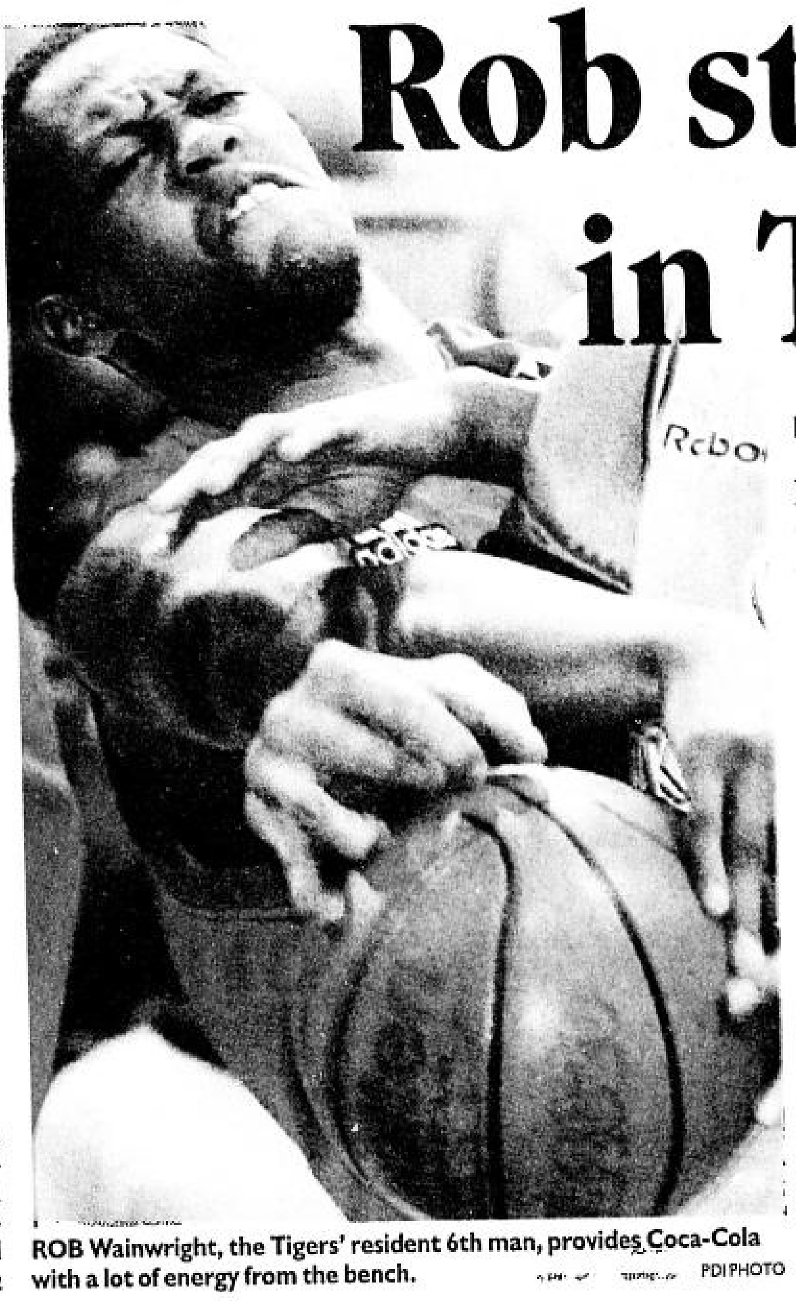
The session, held at Cojuangco's residence in Dasmariñas Village in Makati, approved the new federation's constitution and by-laws.

Cojuangco will transmit to the Fiba the POC approval of the new body before the March 31 deadline.

The looming question, however, is: Will the Fiba finally lift its suspension on the country—which bars the Philippines from international meets—even if the new cage group's constitution does not have the approval of the Basketball

POC/ A22

Rob steals the show in Tigers' victory



ROB Wainwright, the Tigers' resident 6th man, provides Coca-Cola with a lot of energy from the bench. PDI PHOTO

By June Navarro

PUREFOODS FOUND A WAY to contain Ali Peek. Rob Wainwright, though, left the Giants helpless.

Wainwright pounced on the extra defensive attention commanded by Peek and sneaked in crucial baskets as the Coca-Cola Tigers escaped with an 80-72 victory over the Giants last night to keep the lead in the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Subbing for the foul-saddled John Arigo, Wainwright's pair of putbacks sparked a rally that the Coca-Cola sniper punctuated with a fall-away on the way to the Tigers' third straight win.

"It's hard coming off the bench but Rob is playing his role tremendously," said Coca-Cola coach Binky Favis after the Tigers got off to their best start in years.

The Tigers, who finished last in the previous two conferences, are now enjoying a 3-0 start for the first time since a 5-0 conference kickoff in the 2003 Reinforced Conference.

Wainwright actually scored six of his eight points in a 10-2 Coca-Cola run that made it 66-56 and took the fight out of the Giants. James Yap and Kerby Raymundo doomed Purefoods with poor shooting and jittery nerves.

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Cuneta Astrodome*)
4:40 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Air21
7:35 p.m.—San Miguel vs Barangay Ginebra

Yap finished with 18 points but was eight-of-19 from the field while Raymundo had 12 points on six-of-15 shooting.

Ali Peek, who had a perfect 12-of -12 shooting against Alaska, went three of nine from the field and had just 10 points but added 16 rebounds.

In the second game, Red Bull defeated Alaska, 99-85 to even its record to 1-1. The Aces lost their second straight game for a 1-2 slate.

The scores:

First Game

COCA-COLA 80—Miranda 20, Reavis 15, Antonio 14, Peek 10, Wainwright 8, Singson 7, Morano 4, Abarrientos 2, Mamaril 0, Arigo 0.

PUREFOODS 72—Yap J. 18, Raymundo 12, Artadi 11, Limpot 8, Castillo 7, Yap R. 5, Tejada 4, Pingris 3, Evangelista 2, Yee 2.

Quarters: 15-14, 31-32, 52-52, 80-72.

Second Game

RED BULL 99—Villanueva 17, Fonacier 16, Alvarez 12, Pennisi 12, Najorda 10, Baguio 8, Robinson 7, Cruz 7, Felhi 6, Bugia 2, Valenzuela 2.

ALASKA 87—Belasco 19, Allado 16, Cortez 13, Cariaso 11, Bajar 8, Dela Cruz 8, Thoss 6, Wilson 5, Hugnatan 1.

Quarters: 25-18, 51-38, 72-66, 99-87

Tierro advances in Delhi Masters

PATRICK JOHN TIERRO OVERPOWERED India's former national champion, Vijay Kannan, 6-1, 6-3, yesterday at the start of the $25,000 New Delhi Masters at the RK Khanna Stadium hardcourts in New Delhi.

The 20-year-old Tierro showed no ill-effects of his quarterfinal loss to Italy's Federico Torresi in the India Satellite tournament last week in ousting Kannan, the world's 478th-ranked player.

The win set up Tierro, who is backed by the Cebuana Lhuillier, against seventh seed and world No. 813 Hyun Woo-Nam of South Korea in the round of 16.

"I was in a zone today, I served really well," said Tierro, who did not yield a service game, in an overseas call to his coach and former ATP tour player Beeyong Sison at the Subic Bay International Tennis Center.

At world No. 1173, Tierro is the lowest-ranked player in the Masters. But his string of wins in the third leg against higher-ranked foes made him a dangerous foe in this ATP event. *Dennis U. Eroa*

Trader sues Pacman manager

LAWYER NICK KHAN, ONE OF SUperstar Manny Pacquiao's three managers, is being sued by a Los Angeles businessman and boxing manager for putting a strain in his relationship with his fighter, WBC-IBF super bantam champ Israel Vazquez.

Frank Espinoza, who filed the case Wednesday at the Los Angeles Superior Court, accused Khan of trying to get Vasquez to free himself of his contract with the complainant.

Khan had received $92,800 of Pacquiao's $2 million purse from the Morales rematch, according to an article in Secondsout.com.

Salven L. Lagumbay

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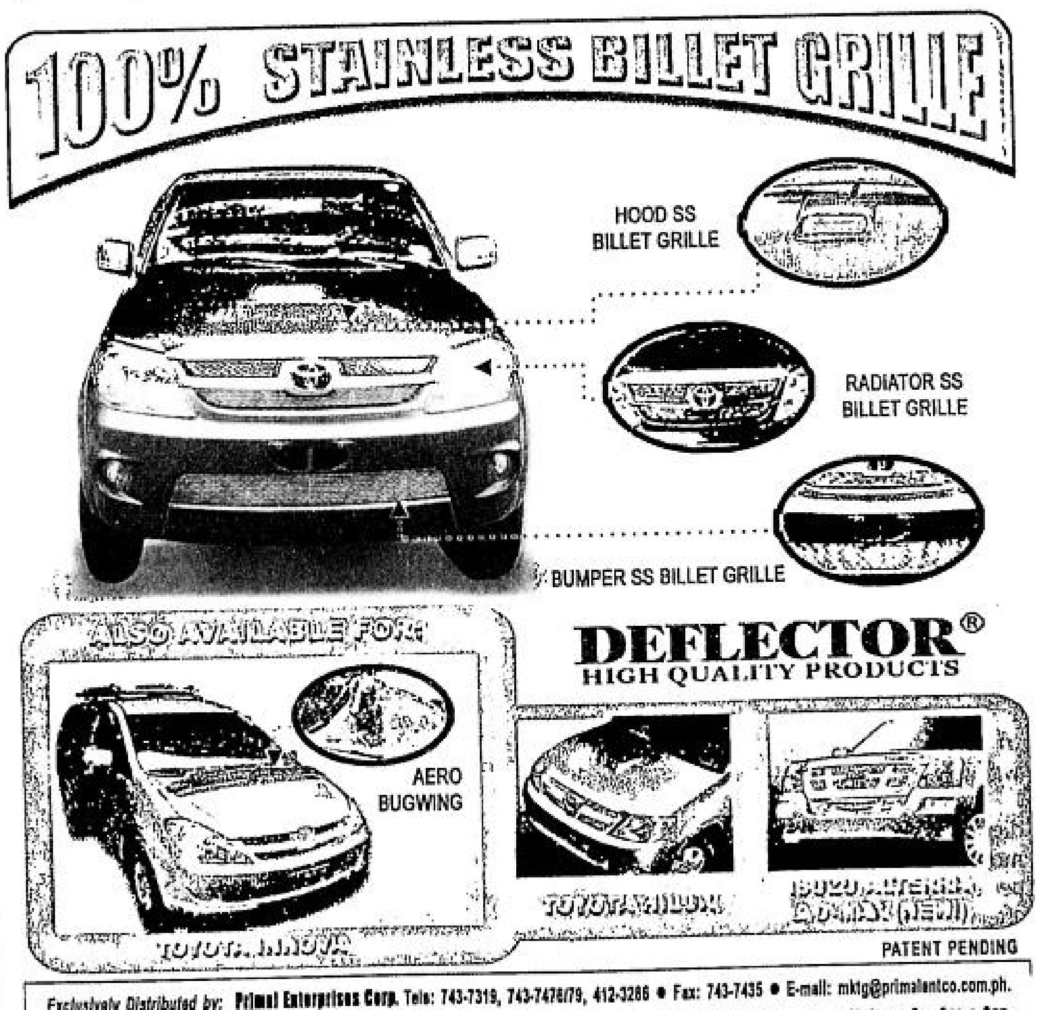

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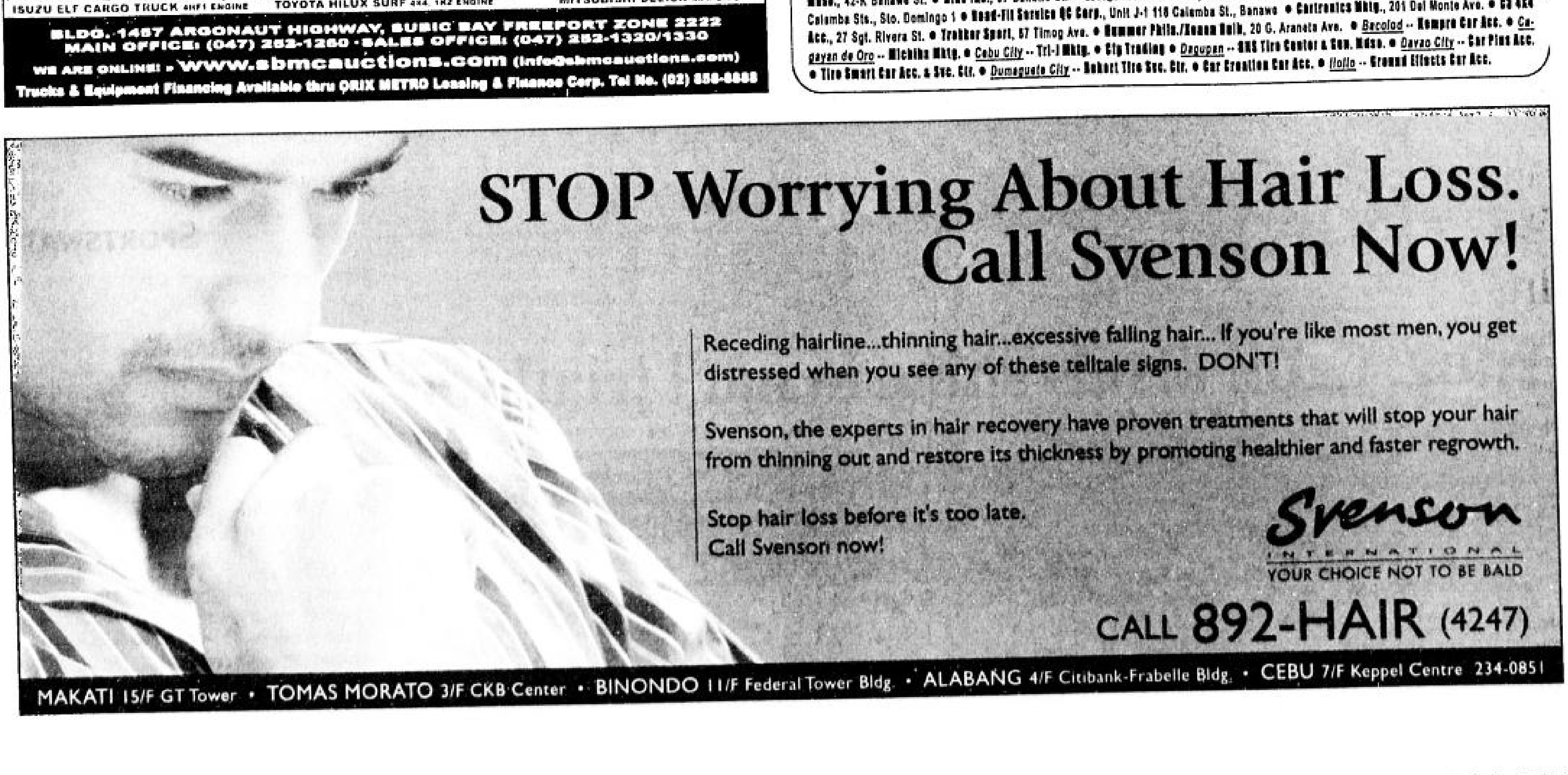

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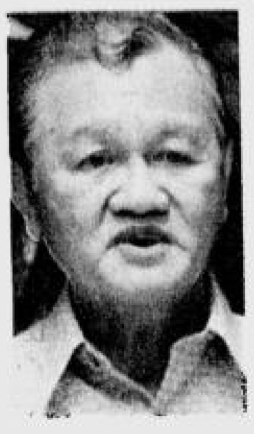
POC okays new cage federation's constitution


COJUANGCO: A go

From page A21

Association of the Philippines (BAP)?

BAP president Joey Lina, in a statement faxed to media offices yesterday, continued to question the move designed to replace the 60-year-old cage body. He has vowed to exclude himself from future meetings of the major stakeholders.

"It would be unthinkable for me to attend meetings aimed at the destruction of the very organization I am president of," said Lina.

He maintained that the best way to have the Fiba suspension lifted is to incorporate the major stakeholders—the POC, the PBA, PBL, UAAP and NCAA—into a restructured BAP.

Lina also accused the other stakeholders of abandoning an earlier agreement to heed his proposal and of easing him out of the talks.

But the stakeholders' group is willing to wage a battle against the BAP all the way to the Court of Arbitration for Sports to get a new federation in place before the end of March.

"Who is Lina for the four of us (stakeholders)?" asked Mark Joseph, who co-chairs the POC basketball panel with legal counsel Ding Tanjuatco.

"The best way to protect basketball is to form a new federation, which is what Fiba told us to do. Who will we follow, Fiba or BAP? We'll take it to the Court of Arbitration if Fiba refuses to accept the new organization."

In his press statement, Lina insisted that the stakeholders cannot form a new organization without the formal expulsion of the BAP by the Fiba.

The PBA, PBL, UAAP, NCAA and Lina were the five stakeholders named in a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the POC and the Fiba last year.

"This organization is association-based and not personality-based," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala. "We are not serving individual interests here; we are protecting the interest of basketball in the country."

Lina said the "surest and fastest way to lift the suspension" is to amend the BAP constitution and by-laws.

But Joseph said that Lina's proposal was "rejected by the major stakeholders" since they did not want "to become liable for BAP's mounting financial and legal accountabilities."

He also questioned Lina's capability to "persuade the 51 directors of BAP to amend the by-laws."

Frank Elizalde, IOC representative to the Philippines, remained optimistic about the new cage group's prospects.

"We will leave the doors open to those who refuse to accept the reality of the situation," said Elizalde.

"I want to make it very clear that Mr. Lina and us have the same intention and that is to unify Philippine basketball," said Eala. "We just differed in the way we wanted to do it. In the end, the stakeholders decided to comply strictly with the MoU."

The PBA will occupy six board seats, the majority in the 15-man board of Pilipinas Basketball.

COURSE RECORD

Balasabas' 68 makes a bang

By Musong R. Castillo

CALATAGAN, BATANGAS—JESSIE BALASABAS yesterday turned in a round never before seen in this demanding course.

The 23-year-old native of Zamboanga turned the wooded layout upside down, shooting a course-record four-under-par 68 to overhaul a four-shot deficit and zoom ahead by four over Rufino Bayron halfway through the 2nd National Caddies' Open.

Balasabas did not miss a fairway and shot five birdies against a solitary bogey for a level 144.

He looked ready to slay the ghost of last year, when he missed the 54-hole cut by one shot and failed to make it to the first batch of products of this event's long-term program.

The fifth in a brood of eight of a crane operator based in Jolo, the 5-foot-10 Balasabas was on target for a top 10 finish last year when he tripped with a 79 in the third round in Canlubang.

"Right after Canlubang, I immediately went to Mr. Manotoc [Tommy, head of the caddies program] in hopes that he'd take me in at Calatagan," Balasabas, who has been caddying at the course since last year, said in Filipino.

"I am the most surprised that I shot a 68."

Canlubang standout Abe Rosal held the previous low of 65. But it was achieved from the white tees that were about 530 yards shorter than the championship blue tees being used for the tourney.

Only 36 of the 102 starters are left to fight it out in the final 36 holes, beginning with the third round today at Cangolf North, where Balasabas failed to make last year's final 18 at Wack Wack.

Bayron, after a 72 on Tuesday, struggled to a 76 and dropped to second at 148. He stood four shots clear of Mark Fernando, another Zamboanga native who turned in a second straight 76 (152).

Efren Robles of the Navy was the first bet from the Big City to crash the Top 5, shooting a 75 for a 157 aggregate and a share of fourth place with Lanang's Rodel Revilleza, who turned in a 79.

Apo Golf teeners Paul Echavez and Zannie Boy Gialon ballooned to 82s, after similar 76s on Tuesday, and dropped to a share of sixth. Four shots behind Bayron in joint second spot overnight, Echavez and Gialon lay at 158, in a tie with Lanang's Israel Bisera, who fired a 76.

Marapara Golf's Joleo Torrecampo shot an 81 and Angelito Anzures of the Veterans Golf Club turned in an 80 for joint ninth place at 159 with three others in the tournament supported by the PSC, San Miguel Corp., and Pagcor and organized by the Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation.

Jeff Tumbaga of Camp Evangelista and Gary Sales of Villamor turned in 81s and Jonathan Dionson of Mactan Island Golf assembled a 78 for similar 160 tallies.

Balasabas hit three of his four birdies in the back side, picking up shots on the 10th, 13th and 15th holes with birdies from as far as 15 feet.

He also birdied Nos. 1 and 6 and gave one back on the seventh when he almost shanked his approach from 120 yards.

Bayron had four birdies, six bogeys and a double on 13th—which he eagled on Tuesday.

JESSE Balasabas reacts after missing a birdie putt on No. 18. ERIK ARAZAS

Valencia tests Pagadian five as NBC south action begins

PAGADIAN CITY—ACTION IN THE SOUTHERN phase of the 2006 National Basketball Conference kicks off tomorrow as the Pagadian Explorers host Valencia Golden Harvest here.

The Explorers of Mayor Sammy Co, one of the expansion teams in the tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Molten, Nature's Spring, Regent Foods and official cable carrier Prime Channel, hope to make a big start with the backing of their home crowd.

Co said the Golden Harvest of Mayor Jose Galario Jr. "would be hard to beat."

"But we'll do everything to start our campaign on a winning note, just like what Batang Tagaytay did last week when it beat Pangasinan Hundred Islands in Tagaytay City," Co said.

The Explorers finished second to inaugural champion Tribu Sugbu in the NBC-Nature's Spring pre-season leg in Tagaytay City.

On Saturday, it's the Iligan Crusaders' turn to host another expansion team—Gov. Manny Piñol's North Cotabato Braves.

The Firefly-backed Crusaders of Mayor Lawrence Cruz hope to do better this time. Last year, the Crusaders lost to reigning NBC champion Ozamiz Cotta in the semifinals after taking a 1-0 lead in the best-of-three series.

But the Crusaders are expected to have their hands full against the Braves, who ruled the preseason leg in Pagadian.

"Our fans are eagerly waiting to see our team in action," said Cruz. "I expect a full house when the boys play North Cotabato."

NBC opened last Friday with Spring-Parañaque of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Vice Mayor Anjo Yllana beating Bacchus/Harbour Centre-Manila and Tagaytay beating Pangasinan.

What price Wimbledon?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I NEVER LIKED THE IDEA.

Bjorn Borg selling his five Wimbledon championship trophies makes me sick. I can not imagine him doing that.

Once upon a time, Bjorn Borg was one of the wealthiest athletes that roamed the Earth. Why it had come to this, why he had to do what he intends to do, it's beyond me, beyond us all.

But then, who am I to judge him? Who are we to pass judgment on anyone?

It is obvious Bjorn Borg needs the money, otherwise he'll never do what he plans to do: Auction his five Wimbledon trophies and two signed rackets he used. He is broke, period. He'll earn more than half a million American dollars ($521,100) from the sale. Big money to anyone in dire straits—and Bjorn Borg is in, well, deep shit. Debts. Negative bank balance. Hole-laden pockets. Empty wallet.

No one is really spared from life's miseries. Rich or poor, celebrity or obscure, each one has a problem. You don't have a problem, you are dead meat. Still, why we cling on to something (life) we couldn't hold on to is—like love—a mystery we all love doing anyways.

I was his fan. From 1976 to 1980, the years Bjorn Borg won Wimbledon, I played tennis almost every day at the Rizal Memorial tennis courts. Copied his forehands to the hilt. Even with my late-night drinking bouts at that time, I'd always report for my morning tennis—hangover notwithstanding. Found out tennis was good at removing spirited toxins from the body.

In those days, I also idolized Jimmy Connors, Bjorn Borg's arch-rival. Later, John McEnroe would be Connors' No. 1 foe for world tennis supremacy.

Connors and McEnroe were Borg's exact opposite: Temperamental and seemingly seething always, like a volcano always about to erupt.

Borg was the quintessential Mr. No Emotion. He loses a point, even a won-point, you'll never see him lose his cool. He just loved what he was doing: return all kinds of shots with monotonous regularity. No fanfare. No frills. No bombasts. He was Mr. Iceman to the core.

Nobody succeeded in intimidating Borg. In those days, anybody playing Borg was virtually playing against the Great Wall of China: whether it was a thunderous serve, a booming volley or a screeching forehand you dished at him, Borg would return them all with the ease and calmness of a spider spinning its web.

With his flying locks and a consistency from the baseline that frustrated everyone who confronted him, Borg became the most recognizable face on earth five straight years from 1976 to 1980.

When he left tennis after almost a 10-year reign as its king, I must admit I was affected. Soon, I'd drift to golf, which I'd consider one of my best moves ever. Golf is so good a sport you can play it whether you are five or a hundred and five.

Initially, Andre Agassi showed interest in Borg's Wimbledon trophies. I hope Agassi, 35, would really pursue his plan and secure the five trophies and other mementos of Borg, 50, in a safe place, as in a museum.

Wimbledon, as we all know, is synonymous to everything good that tennis stands for.

Said Agassi, who won Wimbledon in 1992, about the auction planned for June: "It's not right. The only way you should have a Wimbledon trophy is if you win it, not buy one. I can't make any judgment on Bjorn, but I can say that the thought of a Wimbledon trophy being in the hands of somebody who has a lot of money is upsetting. Wimbledon is the greatest tournament in the world."

Hemingway, a decorated war hero, once wrote, "What price valor?"

He had no answer.

Borg could very well ask, too: "What price Wimbledon?"

Does he have an answer?

Go, figure that out.

* * *

FASTBREAK. Like my fellow Sixties Kids that include Marlo Bengzon, Ed and Minyang Pamintuan, Ramon and May Uy, and Marvin and Pia Velayo, I'm all set to watch the Herman's Hermits perform at the Araneta Coliseum tomorrow. Thanks to Steve O'Neal and Solar Entertainment for their commendable efforts at bringing in the Great, Big Bands of the '60s. Cheers!

* * *

Comments to menju@pldtdsl.net

UAAP to bare probe result; NCAA tightens admission policies

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE UAAP COMMITTEE TASKED to probe the La Salle eligibility scandal has wrapped up its investigation and will release its findings by next month.

The fact-finding committee, headed by Fr. Ermito de Sagon of the University of Sto. Tomas, completed its interviews and data gathering on the case involving Archers Mark Benitez and Tim Gatchalian.

The five-man panel is expected to finish drafting the report this month. It will then present its findings to the board in April.

In a released statement yesterday, La Salle said that its board of trustees "decided to leave the final decision to the UAAP board" on whether to suspend La Salle in all events next season or "consider La Salle's leave of absence in the men's basketball event only."

Meanwhile, the NCAA will enforce stricter admission policies starting next season to avoid the UAAP experience.

Incoming student-athletes who will submit certificates of the Philippine Educational Placement Test must now sit out for one year before suiting up for a team.

"We all know what happened with La Salle in the UAAP and we don't want that to happen," said Fr. Vic Calvo of Letran, the league's outgoing management committee chair. "Admission of PEP tests will be strictly checked—double-checked and triple-checked. There will be a one-year residency before we allow them to play."

The PEP Test is a government exam taken in lieu of a high school diploma.

College of St. Benilde will be the host of the 82nd NCAA season. Incoming management committee chair Bernie Atienza and policy board head Edmund Fernandez represented St. Benilde during the turnover rites yesterday at Letran College.

Vilog, Catiil brods shine in nat'l triathlon

FORMER NATIONAL CHAMPION George Vilog showed his mettle in the inaugural leg of the Speedo-National Age Group Triathlon 2006 series held in Davao City last Sunday.

Vilog clocked 1 hour, 33 minutes and 25 seconds to rule the tough 25-29 age group of the event that drew a record turnout of 93 racers at the Waterfront Insular Hotel.

Other victors were Paulo Quiano, who timed 1:47.46 in the 20-24 group; Jeremias Baquiano, 1:53.11 (30-34); Cagayan de Oro's Christopher Borlongan, 1:56.41 (35-39); Mati's Felix Motilla, 1:49.08 (40-44); Waterfront's Nick Rivas, 2:00.24 (45-49); Gem Romero, 2:04.01 (50-54); and Ernesto Rivera, 2:14.48 (55-59).

Brothers Neil and Vic Catiil, finished first and third, respectively, in the below-20 age group to lead a host of prized finds.

The series marked the first time that the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (Trap) increased the race distance to 1K swim-30K bike-7K run. It also paved the way for the return of the team relays.

"The Triathlon Association of Davao (Triad) together with local organizer Vic Sai has done a good job of promoting triathlon in the region," said Trap president Tom Carrasco Jr., who presented the medals and prizes to the top finishers.

There were a total of 47 individual entries and 46 relay team entries in the race as Triad, headed by Alexander Sam and vice president Ernesto Rivera, went all out to meet their target number of participants.

Danao City will be the venue of the second Speedo-NAGT race sponsored by PowerBar, David's Salon, Asian Center for Insulation, Metro Alliance Group and the PSC, on March 26.

SPORTSWATCH

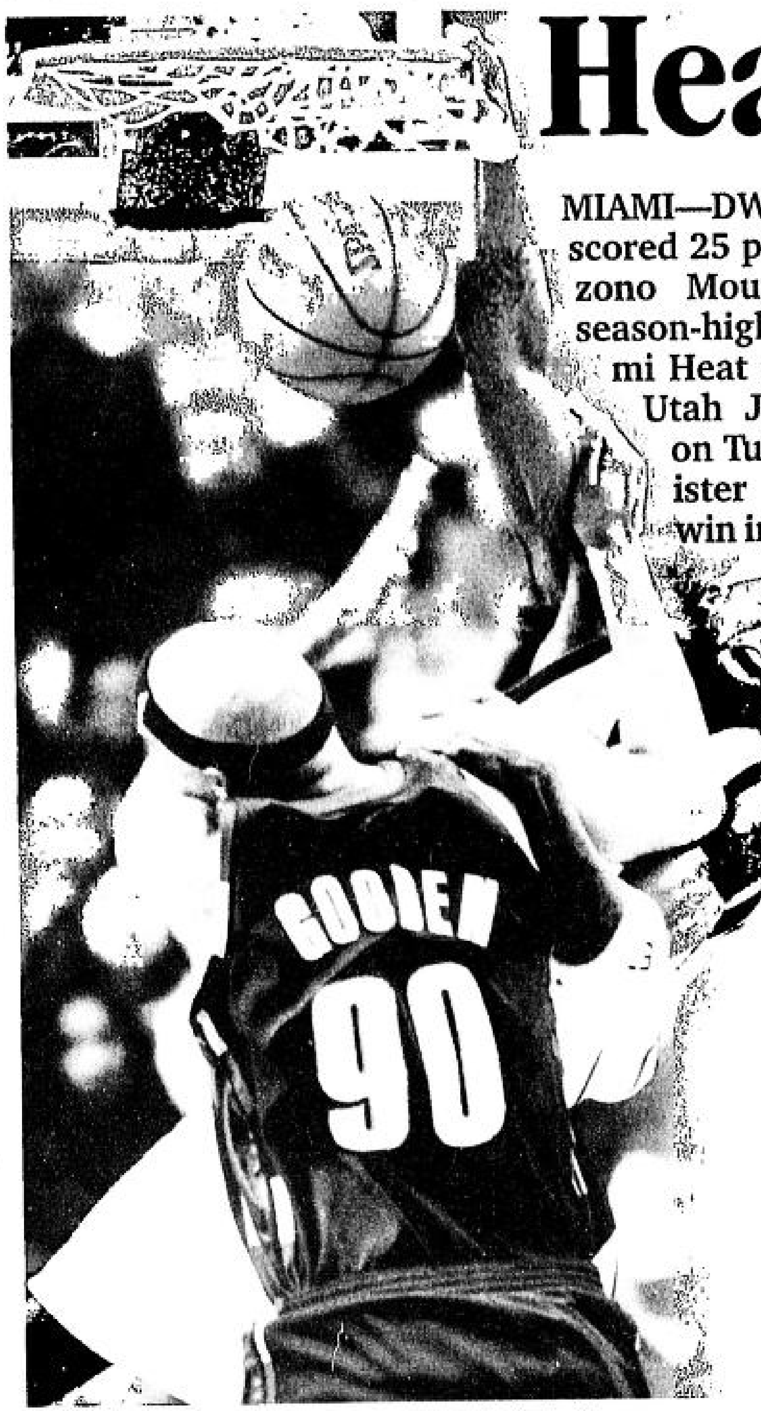
51 entries lead Largahan at Roligon

AFTER TWO DAYS OF BATTLE, 51 PARTICIPANTS LEAD THE PACK IN ROLIGON Mega Cockpit's Largahan 5-Cock Derby, which has lured a field of 360 entries. The third and final elimination round starts at 2 p.m. today with 120 fights on tap. The qualifiers will dispute the championship this Saturday. Among the frontrunners are Tos Reyes, Ed de Guzman, Arnold Fernandez, Gerry Paraguya, Charlie Espiritu, Neri Mamansad, Juan Jurdana, Neil Fidelin, and E. R. Garcia. Host Rolly Ligon has put up a jackpot prize of P2 million, for an entry fee of only P4,400. Ligon said the bonus prize, a brand new Toyota Vios, will go to the fastest win champion. Derby sponsors are Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone.

Quirino, La Union derbies backed

A TOTAL CASH POT OF P500,000 IS AT STAKE IN THE QUIRINO SPECIAL 4-COCK Derby this Friday at the Quirino Recreation Center in Siguday, Quirino province. The event, hosted by Gov. Pete Bacai and ERD, in cooperation with Thunderbird Platinum, requires an entry fee of P22,000 and a minimum bet of P11,000. Also coming up is a 5-cocker set March 20 at the San Fernando Sports Complex in San Fernando, La Union. The derby dangles P500,000 in total prizes and is hosted by Mayor George Pinzon and sponsored by Thunderbird Multi-Grain Conditioner. The derby enjoys the support of Rep. Manuel Ortega, Mayor Joaquin Ostrea, Vice Mayor Alfred Concepcion, and the Luna, Bangar Cockers and Malauan cockers.

Heat reduce Jazz to ashes



DALLAS Mavericks guard Jason Terry dunks the ball over Cleveland Cavaliers forward Drew Gooden. AP

MIAMI—DWYANE WADE scored 25 points and Alzono Mourning hit a season-high 19 as Miami Heat scorched the Utah Jazz, 121-83, on Tuesday to register their 12th win in 13 games.

Miami had six players in double figures, including 13 from Shaquille O'Neal in just 18 minutes of play as the Heat rolled to their fourth biggest margin of victory in franchise history.

James Posey with 16, Gary Payton with 12 points and Jason Williams with 10, also hit double figures for the Heat.

Matt Harpring paced Utah with 20 points while Carlos Boozer was the only other member of the Jazz to hit double digits with 12 points.

The Heat got the contest off to a storming start, charging to a 41-14 first quarter lead led by Wade's 19 points there.

Miami eased up in the second quarter but still entered the intermission with a commanding 62-40 lead.

The Heat, however, were quickly back in charge after the break, outscoring Utah 39-22 to leave the Jazz no way back.

In Seattle, Raja Bell scored 25 points and Shawn Marion had 24 and 11 boards as the Phoenix Suns won a 129-120 shootout over the Seattle SuperSonics.

Tim Thomas contributed 23 points on near-perfect 10-for-11 shooting and Steve Nash added 23 points and eight assists in the Suns' 13th win in 15 games.

In Sacramento, Mike Bibby bagged 29 points and Ron Artest added 28, leading the Kings to a 114-98 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers, extending their win streak to a season-best five games.

In Philadelphia, Chris Bosh scored 31 points and Darrick Martin had a season-high 18 points and 12 assists to lead the Toronto Raptors past the 76ers, 111-97.

Playing without the injured Allen Iverson, the Sixers were led by Chris Webber's 23 points and 11 rebounds and John Salmons' career-high 23 points.

The Sixers (31-32) lost for the fourth time in five games and fell 3½ games behind Atlantic Division-leading New Jersey.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Antawn Jamison had 35 points and 16 rebounds as the Washington Wizzards tripped the Bobcats, 119-114.

In Memphis, Tennessee, Jake Tsakalidis scored a season-high 19 points and matched his career high with 16 rebounds to spark a 94-76 Grizzlies rout of the Boston Celtics.

In Chicago, Ben Gordon scored 23 points, and Chicago used its best defensive effort of the season to beat Portland 95-66.

The Bulls play at Milwaukee on Wednesday night and are 2½ games behind the Bucks and 76ers, who are tied for seventh place in the Eastern Conference.

In San Antonio, Tony Parker had 20 points and 11 assists, Brent Barry made four 3-pointers and all six shots from the floor, and the Spurs crushed the fading New Orleans Hornets, 96-81.

The Spurs (50-14) share the top record in the Western Conference with the Dallas Mavericks. *Reuters, AP*

● **NBA on SOLAR SPORTS:** 8 a.m.—Detroit vs Toronto (replay at 8 p.m.)

Hingis topples Davenport

HINGIS: Probable Grand Slam winner

INDIAN WELLS, CALIFORNIA—MARTINA HINGIS toppled Lindsay Davenport to reach the quarterfinals of the Pacific Life Open Tuesday, continuing a comeback that has amazed even her amazing compatriot Roger Federer.

Former world No. 1 Hingis triumphed, 6-3, 1-6, 6-2, over the second-seeded American as they renewed a rivalry that stretches back more than a decade.

Meanwhile, Switzerland's current world No. 1 Federer had to play his way out of a jam against Belgian Olivier Rochus, finally emerging with a 3-6, 6-2, 7-5 third-round victory over the world No. 32.

"It's always special to play Lindsay," said Hingis, who has surged up the rankings to her current No. 32 since her return in January after three years away from the game.

The two were meeting for the 25th time, but for the first time in what Hingis calls the second phase of her career.

"It's definitely not easy mentally for me to play her," Hingis said. "Now I know that I have the potential to meld with the best."

It wasn't a classic. The 29-year-old Davenport was diagnosed with a bulging disc in her lower back on Thursday which no doubt contributed to her 42 unforced errors.

"I thought she might crack the top 30 at the end of the year," Federer said of Hingis. "Here we are probably thinking she has a shot at winning a Slam. It's quite incredible." *AFP*

WORLD BASEBALL

D. Republic advances; Japan keeps hopes afloat

ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA—THE DOMINICAN Republic secured a berth in the next round of the World Baseball Classic on Tuesday, while Japan rebounded from a bitter loss to the United States to keep their title hopes alive.

The Dominicans held powerful Venezuela to just one hit in a 2-1 victory in San Juan, Puerto Rico, while Japan's offense exploded for 12 hits to crush Mexico, 6-1, in Anaheim.

Last week in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, the Dominican Republic whipped Venezuela, 11-5, but Tuesday's game was a low-scoring affair, highlighted by standout pitching.

Daniel Cabrera struck out seven over four scoreless innings and was aided by four relievers to shut down Venezuela.

"I've never pitched in a World Series game, but I don't believe I would have as much desire to do as well as I did today," the 24-year-old Baltimore Orioles starter said.

Miguel Batista got the win despite pitching to just one batter in the seventh inning.

A passed ball by Venezuelan catcher Ramon Hernandez in the bottom of the seventh with the bases loaded allowed Luis Castillo to score and give the Dominicans their winning run.

The Dominican Republic will now face the winner of Wednesday night's game between Cuba and Puerto Rico in the WBC semifinals in San Diego on Saturday. *Reuters*

Big motocross audience eyed

THE PUERTO PRINCESA LOCAL GOVERNMENT is expecting more than 70,000 spectators to watch the FIM-UAM 2006 Motocross Masters of Asia March 18 and 19, at the city's motocross racetrack adjacent to the city hall.

Mayor Edward Hagedorn said he expects the event to boost Puerto Princesa's tag as the country's sports tourism capital especially with cable giants ESPN and Star TV beaming the event to 540 million households worldwide.

FIM-UAM vice president and Namssa director Macky Carapiet said last year's event also held in Puerto Princesa drew 70,000 spectators.

Twenty-five riders from 12 competing nations will be vying for the coveted crown in the centerpiece Asian Open 125cc class and the Junior Asian 85cc Class, the Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn Cup—a sterling silver trophy.

The Philippines' Revtex Glenn Aguilar, who was recently feted as the 2006 Golden Wheel International Awardee, admits he may have a hard time against younger rivals in the event organized by Namssa and supported by the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, the Department of Finance, Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Import Services.

For details, e-mail namssa01@hotmail.com, call 0917-8992363 or check out www.asiamx.org.

Live in the Metro Live in the Metro Live in

Winston
in CONCERT

WINGS TOUR
2006

Morning Sessions
Featuring
Imago
Velcro
Stonefree
Fri. March 17, 7am
Atchie's Bar
6/F, The Orient Square Bldg.,
Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center

Brought to you by:
Winston
Spirit of the U.S.A.

No minors allowed. Open to persons 18 years old and above only. Organizer reserves the right to refuse entry to those without IDs as proof of age.

Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

UST Tigers, UE juniors UAAP overall champs

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS WAS formally awarded the overall championship of the 68th University Athletic Association of the Philippines during the awards rites at the Adamson University Auditorium recently.

The Tigers, atoning for their dismal sixth-place effort in the centerpiece men's basketball, ruled eight of the 26 events contested and finished second in eight others to win pulling away with 302 points.

University of the Philippines topped four events to place second at the expense of La Salle, which had five titles but fared poorly in other events.

The UP Maroons compensated by placing second in four events and third in seven to snatch runner-up honors with 244 points, 10 up on the Archers.

UST swept table tennis and taekwondo and topped men's badminton and women's chess, judo and swimming.

Far Eastern University, the men's basketball titlist, improved to fourth overall—from fifth in Season 67—with 192 points despite not fielding teams in seven events.

Ateneo slid to fifth with 180 points, claiming the men's football and women's basketball crowns.

Next year's host University of the East, which swept the fencing crowns, stood at sixth with 166 points; Adamson, the perennial champion in women's softball, was seventh with 87; and National U brought up the rear with 21 points.

Adamson U's Fr. Maximino Rendon, the Season 68 president, and Dr. Ricardo Matibag, the league secretary-treasurer, presided over the awards ceremonies.

The Maroons reigned supreme in men's baseball, chess, judo and swimming, while the Archers were No. 1 in men's and women's tennis, women's badminton, football and volleyball.

In the junior division, UE copped the overall title as well as Athlete of the Year honors through Nelson Mariano III in chess.

UE amassed 101 points anchored on titles in chess, table tennis, girls' swimming and a sweep of boys' and girls' volleyball.

Runner-up UST garnered 79 points with only a title in taekwondo to show, a far cry from the five crowns it won last year. UST was second to UE in the two volleyball divisions and in table tennis.

La Salle-Zobel topped boys' basketball, while Ateneo ruled boys' swimming.

Stockinger to show RP flag in European races

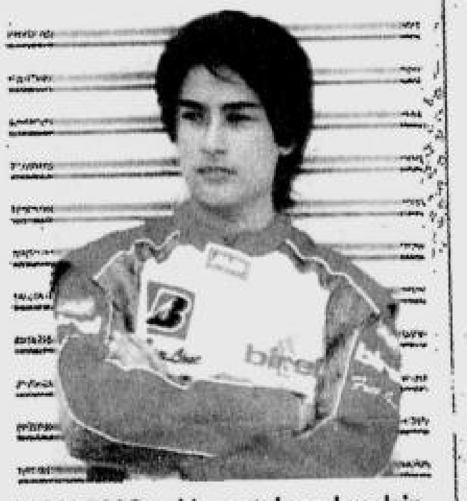
TWO-TIME WORLD FINALIST MARLON Stockinger will represent the Philippines in the Rotax Max Euro Challenge set March 25-26 in Salbris, France.

The 14-year-old Stockinger, who took the local Senior Rotax Max title last year, will be the youngest driver in the stellar field and the first Filipino ever to join the tough Euro Challenge.

"I will be up against the world's best karters like (World Rotax Max champion) Christiano Morgado of South Africa," said Stockinger, who is sponsored by Swiss Finance and Investment Corp., Accel, Birel Motorsport, Kart Care, Kartmore Racing Services, Bridgestone, Salon Prive, Lima City Hotel and Malaysia Airlines.

Stockinger will campaign in Europe with DR Racing, which is run by five-time world karting champion Danilo Rossi.

The other rounds of the Euro Challenge are slated May 20 and 21 in Lonato, Italy, July 29 and 30 in Vienna, Austria, and Sept. 23 and 24 in Belgium.



MARLON Stockinger takes a break in between heats in last year's Rotax Max World Finals in Malaysia.

Stockinger is also set to see action in the Italian Rotax Max Open in April, as well as this year's Asian Open Karting and Philippine Super Karting Series.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Science and Technology
Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and
Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)
Science Garden, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City 1100

P.R. No. AD 06-0038, 06-0138 & 06-0147
Photocopying Machines, Security and Janitorial Service
PAGASA Central Office

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PAGASA, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project Rental of Photocopying machines, Security and Janitorial Services

Qty/Unit	Brief Description	Approved Budget for the Contract	Contract Duration
Lot 1	Security Services (33 Security Guards)	P 3,946,140.00	May to December 2006
Lot 2	Janitorial Services (39 Janitors)	P 3,416,590.24	May to December 2006
Lot 3	Rental of Photocopying Machines (27 units)	P 467,000.00	May to December 2006

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be covered by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

Activities	Schedule/Time	Venue
1. Issuance of Bid Requirements & Bidding Documents	March 9-22, 2006	General Services Section 3/F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
2. Pre-bid Conference	March 23, 2006 / 2:00 p.m.	Amihan Conference Room 2/F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
3. Opening of Eligibility Requirements and Envelope I	April 4, 2006 / 9:00-11:00 a.m.	
4. Opening of Bids – Envelope II	April 4, 2006 / 2:00 p.m.	
5. Bid Evaluation & Post-qualification	April 5-19, 2006	
6. Notice of Award	April 26, 2006	

Interested parties may avail Bid Requirements and Bidding Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee equivalent to 0.2% of the approved budget per item in no case lower than P500.00 and not more than P1,000.00 to the PAGASA Cashier, upon presentation of this advertisement clipping together with the Company's TIN.

The PAGASA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) PRISCO D. NILO
Chairman, PAGASA BAC

(March 9 & 16, 2006)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

ITB No.		Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2006-020	50 units	Automated Teller Machines	P 35,000,000.00	
		PLUS: Four (4) Year Maintenance Package	11,550,000.00	
			P 46,550,000.00	LBP Funds
2006-046	1,000 bdls.	Jacket for Savings Passbook with Logo, 5-5/8" x 4-1/8"	P 214,500.00	
	9,000 bdls.	Jacket for Savings Signature Card, 5" x 7-1/2"	1,845,000.00	
	1,000 pcs.	Checkbook Jacket, 8-6/8" x 7"	13,500.00	
	3,000 bdls.	Plastic Jacket for ATM Card (Green), 148mm x 103mm	855,000.00	
			P 2,928,000.00	LBP Funds
2006-053	22 units	Multimedia Projector	P 2,164,800.00	LBP Funds

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bidding for the above requirements is scheduled on April 5, 2006 at 1:00 PM and pertinent Bid Documents may be obtained from the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 (ITB No. 2006-020) and P1,000.00 (ITB Nos. 2006-046 and 2006-053).**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **March 21, 2006 (ITB No. 2006-020) and March 23, 2006 (ITB Nos. 2006-046 and 2006-053)** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to **Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).**

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, declare the bidding a failure or waive any required formality therein and make an award to the bidder whose bid is the most advantageous to the Bank.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI–March 9 & 16, 2006)

Basilan to host junior netfest

PEACE AND ORDER through sports will be showcased when the Basilan Tennis Club hosts the 2006 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop on March 17-19 in Isabela, Basilan.

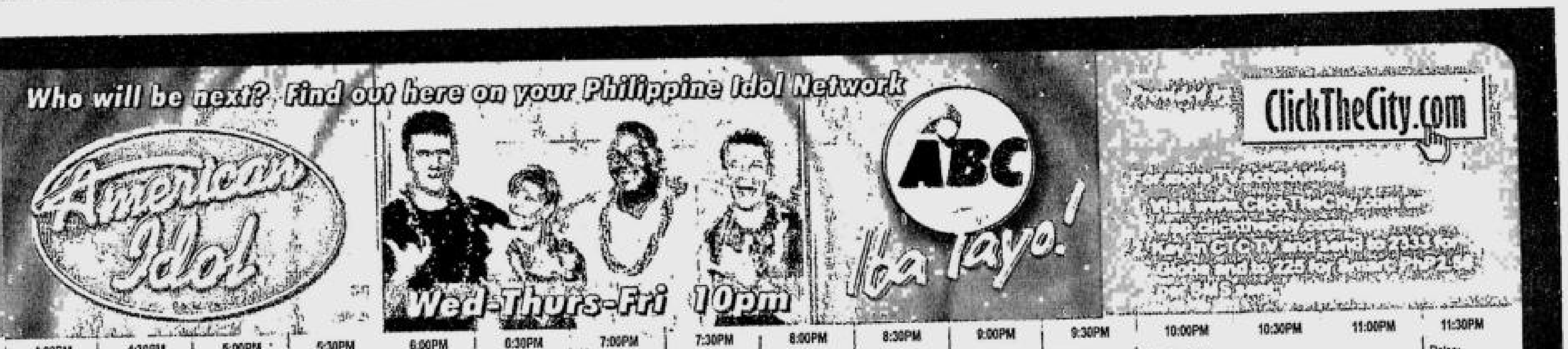
"We hope to showcase the brighter side of Basilan, and the Milo tennis event will surely help us achieve our goal," project director and Basilan Judge Kaudri Jainul said.

The Milo netfest, organized by CTW and supported by Prince equipment and Adidas, is being coordinated with club president Totie Latip, his VP Benjo Abubakar, and officers Ramly Amping, Mac Sangkula, Del Halipa and Rady Salip.

The nearby Lamitan Tennis Club, through youth director James Ramirez, will host the Milo beginners clinic on Mar. 18-19.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Thursday, March 16, 2006


Who will be next? Find out here on your Philippine Idol Network
American Idol
Wed-Thurs-Fri 10pm
ABC
Iba Tayo!
ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5			WNCAA (Rerun)		Barclay's EPL		Goals		Sentro	Mumbai Thrillers	S.O.S		Wala Yan Sa Loko Ko		Big News	American Idol			Dokyu
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Outstanding Twins	TV Patrol World		Gulong Ng Palad	Sa Piling Mo	Princess Lulu	Pinoy Big Brother		Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
AXN		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		CSI: Miami (Season II)		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Cold Squad		Amazon		Fear Factor (Season V)		Fear Factor (Season V)		The Contender			
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show		Baby Looney Tunes	Codename: Kids Next Door	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers	Battle B-Daman	Energy Bomb	X-Men Evolution	Samurai Jack	Justice League	Static Shock	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers
Cinema One		Anak Ni Waray				Antipolo Massacre				Notoryus				The Grudge 2				S2pid Luv	
Cinemax	Action Jackson			Purple Hearts				The Sea Wolves				A Twist Of The Knife			Dinocroc			Chips '99	
CNN				Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
Crime/Suspense		Crossing Jordan		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	North Mission Road	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		What Should You Do?		The Closer		Prison Break	
Discovery Channel		The Secrets of Megalightning		The Greatest Ever		Superstructures		The Future Is Wild		Extreme Engineering		The Road to Le Mans		Mythbusters		The Greatest Ever		Power Zone	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Lizzie Mcguire		Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Ranger	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN	Asian Tour TCL Classic Day 1						Asian X Games '05 Presented by Kia	In The Driver's Seat	Pool Snooker Masters Cup 2005		Sportscenter Asia	Pool/ Snooker Masters Cup 2005		In The Driver's Seat	Pool/ Snooker Premier Snooker League '04 Scotland				Sportscenter Asia
ETC		For Love Or Money 3		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Will & Grace 4	Insider Weekend/ Rated On	Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
EWTN	The Catholic Faith & Vatican II	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Virtue Storybook	Image Of God	Your Vocation: God's Call in Your Life	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Good Or Evil, Who Decides?	EWTN Gallery	Where God Weeps	EWTN Live (Encore) With Fr. Mitch Pacwa		Catechisms And Controversies	The Word Was Made Flesh	Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15PM)	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	The Journey Home Encore	
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	First Love Of A Royale Prince		Dragonball Z	Great Teacher Onizuka	La Robe de Mariage	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Encantadia	My Name Is Kim Sam Soon	Starstruck 3	Jewel In The Palace		Magpakailanman			Saksi
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye II		Mike Bassett: England Manager			Ladies Man	Bewitched	The Nanny	Strong Medicine		Judging Amy		Mystery Woman: Snapshot			Judging Amy (10:35PM)		Strong Medicine (11:25PM)
HBO			Gettin' Square (3:45 PM)				Out Of Bounds			The River Wild				Vanity Fair				Pink Cadillac (11:15PM)	
Hero TV	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Beyblade V Force	Crush Gear Nitro	Shadow Of The Elves	Mission Odyssey	Rune Soldier	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Mission Odyssey	Rune Soldier
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		ME TV		Japan Video Topics		Global Family Series	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Smackdown				JLU	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hates Chris	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Comedy Central Presents	South Park	The Man Show
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		It's Good To Be	Life & Style		E! True Hollywood Story		Road & Track	Back To Basics
MTV Philippines	Moto, 5 Things About P.O.D.	MTV Cribs	MTV Live Cuisine		Pimp My Ride	Pop Inc		2006 MAA Nominee Specials	MTV Hits			Bling # 105	Got Spotted	TRL		Punk'D	Brand New	MTV Hits	VH1 Video Collections
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX News	Top 5	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Presents		MYX Bandarito	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXLOG
National Geographic	Africa From The Ground Up	Megastructures		Storm Stories		Frontiers of Construction				Wow!		About Asia		Terrorism Week		Megastructures: USS Virginia/ Ultimate Vegas Casino Built/ Train Terminal/ Ultimate Roller Coaster		Storm Stories: Hurricane Ivan/ Killing Trans-plant/ Hurricane Floyd/ Floods Brazil Hurricane	
NBN		Value Vision		New Life TV Shopping		Teledyaryo	[illegible] Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo				Network Forum		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	Rocket Power	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Four Eyes	My Life As A Teenage Robot	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Fight Night 4				Mga Taong Papel				Bad Boys Gang				Sekreta Ini				Ang Huling Birhen Sa Lupa
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		Zentrix	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Love At Aegean Sea	Irene	Mars	Laugh To Laugh: Ang Kulit	O, Mare Ko		News On Q	Women's Desk		Irene	Romance
RPN 9	TV Shopping					Global Window		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The 4400		Medium		Invasion		Newswatch Now	Global Window	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping		SBN Music Video		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Friends Again		SBN Music Video	
Solar Sports		WTA 2005 Tour Champs By LA Round Robin				GWS 09-2006	NBA Game: Celtics @ Grizzlies					NBA Game: Pistons @ Raptors					Sportsdesk	Philippine Open Finals	
Sports Plus	NBA Game: Phoenix @ Seattle					World Poker Tour 2				Gillette World Cup Preview 3	Slipstream	World's Greatest Auto Shows		World Game		Bay 101 Celebrity Poker Challenge			
Star Movies	Dudley Do-Right (2:40 PM)			Imagining Argentina				Shadow Of Fear (5:50 PM)			John Carpenter's Ghosts Of Mars			10 Things I Hate About You			Million Dollar Baby		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Angel		American Idol		Star News Asia	Seinfeld	American Idol	The Simple Life (Series 3)	Scrubs	8 Simple Rules	The Drew Carey Show	Less Than Perfect (Series 2)	Seinfeld	American Idol
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Spells	Pinoy Big Brother	Wazzup Wazzup	The Contender		Alias (8:20 PM)	Desperate Housewives		News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

RUDY ESPERAS

Please don't ask me!

MINA and Rustom, a very long time ago, it seems. She is planning to wed Zoren Legaspi.

Carmina Villaroel dodges reporters waiting to quiz her about Rustom

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTRESS CARMINA Villaroel, who has not commented on her ex-husband Rustom Padilla's recent on-cam confession that he was gay, successfully evaded entertainment writers on Monday night by walking out of a press conference in Quezon City.

Carmina stepped out of the launch party for GMA 7's new soap series, "Majika," shortly before the question-and-answer portion, leaving behind co-star and current true-life partner, Zoren Legazpi, to answer questions about Rustom.

Ending years of speculation about his sexual orientation, Rustom admitted that he was gay on the March 1 episode of the reality TV series, "Pinoy Big Brother."

A swarm of reporters who attended the party at the Oasis Restaurant on Monday cornered Zoren that night after Carmina's "escape." When a writer asked about Carmina's immediate reaction to Rustom's revelation, Zoren simply said: "*Wala lang.*"

No big deal

He refused to say whether or not he and Carmina caught the controversial episode. "We can't comment on that. It's over between them," Zoren pointed out. "*Wala na sa amin 'yung* burden of proof."

In other words, the actor insisted, it really isn't a big deal. "Mina and Rustom have no more connection. In the future, if I bumped into him, I'd say hi, just like any normal person."

The coming out was actually one of Rustom's reasons for joining the reality show, according to a story published on abs-cbnnews.com.

PLEASE/ A2-4

Housemate faces Army discharge

By Joselle Badilla
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—"PINOY BIG BROTHER" celebrity housemate Gretchen Malalad has been recommended for discharge from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) due to unauthorized leave of absence since January.

The recommendation was made by the Air Force Provost Marshall office, which investigated her absence.

Malalad, accompanied by PBB director Lauren Dyogi, showed up at the summary investigation conducted Tuesday by the Provost Marshall at the Villamor Air Base.

"Malalad was recommended for discharge. Her case for discharge is now being processed," Col. Restituto Padilla, Air Force (PAF) spokesperson, told the INQUIRER.

In a phone interview, Col. Arthur Abadilla, PAF Provost Marshall, also told the INQUIRER that the investigation lasted more than two hours.

Career shift

Abadilla said the result of the probe will be forwarded to the Judge Advocate General Office (Jago), the office of the personnel (A1) and the PAF Commanding General.

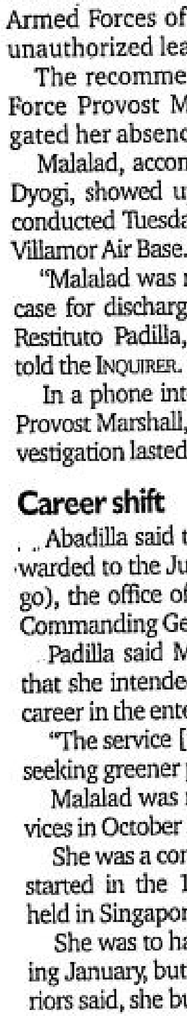
Padilla said Malalad told the Provost Marshall that she intended to leave the service to pursue a career in the entertainment industry.

"The service [will not stop] its personnel [from] seeking greener pastures," Padilla said.

Malalad was recruited into the PAF Special Services in October 2002 because of her athletic skills.

She was a constant medalist in karatedo, having started in the 1999 Asian Karate Championship held in Singapore.

She was to have undergone basic military training January, but failed to report. Instead, her superiors said, she busied herself with things other than her military job. She later reported to her unit, the Air Force Service Support Group based in Camp Villamor, but only to seek permission to join PBB.



MALALAD

Stipend revoked

"The PAF gave her an option—whether to stay or go," Padilla said.

Despite the non-approval, Malalad went on with her plan and joined ABS-CBN's reality TV show on February 5. Four days later, she was declared absent without official leave (Awol).

The Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) said it was also revoking Malalad's allowance. Athletes of Malalad's caliber are entitled to a monthly stipend from the government.

Guillermo Iroy Jr., PSC executive director, said athletes who are not undergoing training are not entitled to said benefit.

"She is definitely not in training," said Iroy. "We see her everyday on Pinoy Big Brother."

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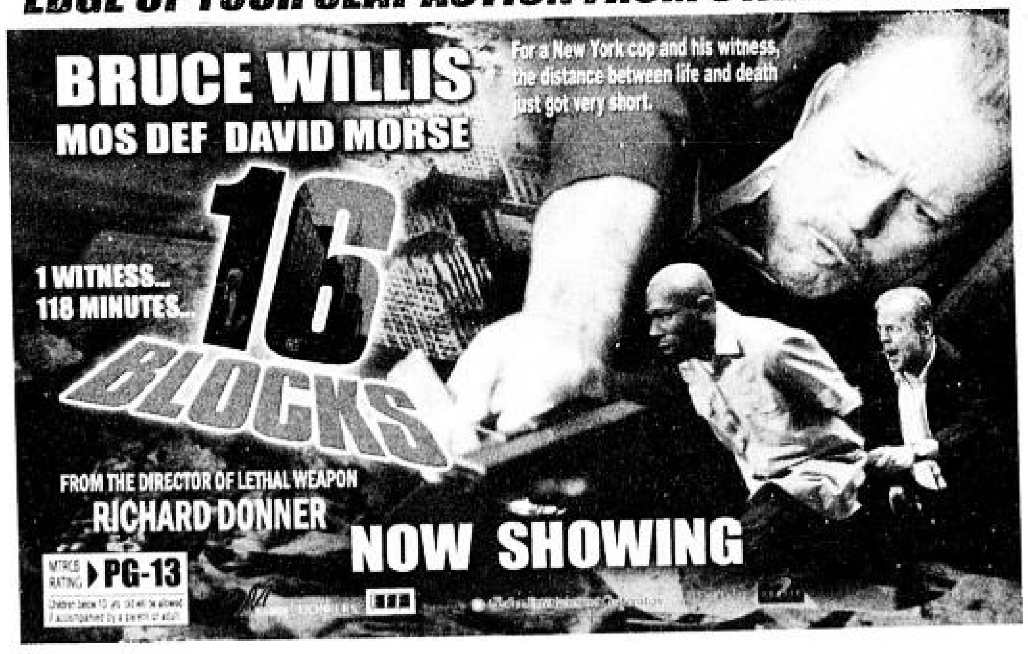

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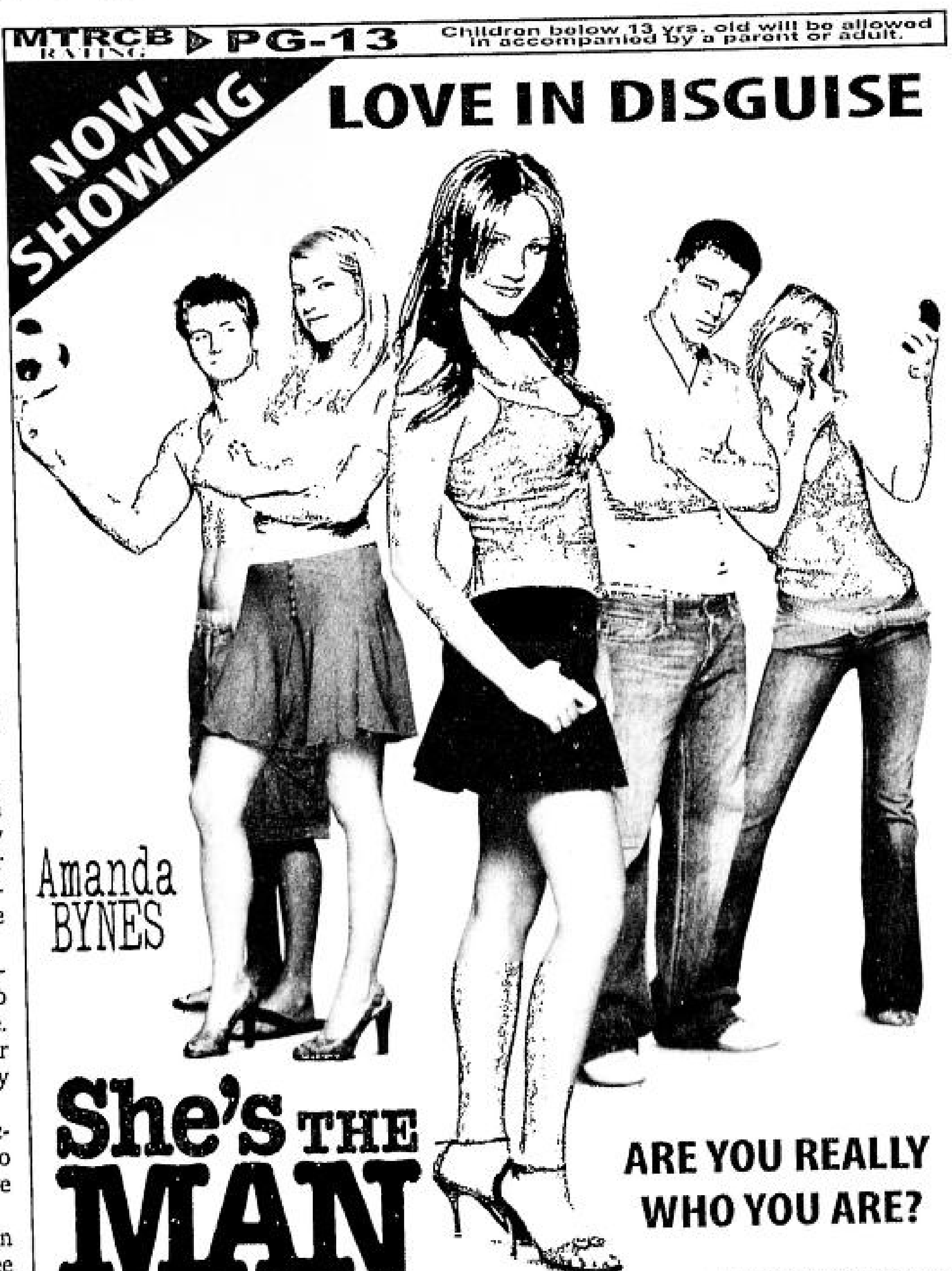

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VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

QUIZMASTER: *LAHAT BA NG MGA* STAND-UP comics, *kailangang palaging nakatayo?*

Contestant: *Oo*—stand-up *sila, e.*

(No, don't be so literal-minded!)

***

Host: We have been getting so many fires lately. What's happening, what causes them?

Guest: Different reasons. But one now becoming more frequent is, *nagkakasunog dahil sa nagpapabayaang sasakyan ng* appliances.

(*Sasakyan ng* appliances?—Oh, *saksakan.*)

***

Host: Now that the challenge is over, what do you plan to do so you feel better?

Guest: Well, it was hard and muddy, so *siyempre maliligo ako, pupunta sa* spa, *at magpapa*-pedicure *sa kamay!*

(*Ano daw?*)

***

Host: Is the economy improving this year?

Guest: We think so. Our statistics show that there is a rise in the national per cavity income.

(We have more money—but our teeth hurt!)

***

Host: After your modeling tutorial session, are you a better model now?

Guest: Yes, when I model now, my walk is more bouncely!

(*Ay*, bouncely!)

***

Host: How much do you admire (name of beauty queen)?

Guest: Oh, so much! She was the one who idolized me to also join a beauty pageant!

(Point of clarification: Who's the idol here?)

***

Host: Why did you join the recent political rallies?

Guest: Frankly, because I think our leaders now should be changed, they should be outsed from power!

(*Ay*, outsed!)

***

Host: People say we don't have enough really good actors. Do you agree?

Guest: No, we have many good young actors, but they have not yet been given major roles, so they're still waiting the wings, as the saying goes.

(No, that's not how it goes...)

***

Host: How should this political conflict be resolved?

Guest: Through legal means, that's why they are threating to bring the case to the court.

(*Ay*, threating!)

***

Host: What do you have to say to your friend who is leaving us now?

Guest: *Salamat, ikaw ang bumuhay ng* confident *ko!*

(Well, it's the thought that counts.)

Color It Red

AFTER a six-year hiatus, Color It Red has come out with a new album. The self-titled compilation has 12 original tracks. The carrier song, "Dalawa," is an upbeat love song that's now getting good radio airplay.

The band's current lineup is made up of original members **Barbi Cristi** and **Cooky Chua** (vocals), **Bopip Paraguya** on bass, **Jayvee Torres** on drums and **Sam Baja** on keyboards.

MTV nominees

THE 2006 MTV Asia Awards will be held on May 6 at the Siam Paragon in Bangkok, Thailand. More than 50 Asian and international artists have been nominated; voting began last March 1.

My Chemical Romance bagged three nominations; **James "You're Beautiful" Blunt** copped two. Asian stars **Stefanie Sun** (Singapore) and **Jay Chou** (Taiwan) are nominated for the fifth consecutive year, while **Wang Lee Hom** (Taiwan), **Tata Young** (Thailand), **Asha Bhosle** (India) and **Too Phat** (Malaysia) are the local hot favorites.

Nominee **Simon Webbe**, whose debut single "Lay Your Hands" is a hit on the UK charts, will attend the May 6 awards rites.

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V FOR VENDETTA
12:10 FS / 12:35 MF / 03:20
06:05 / 08:20 LFS
08:50 LMF / 11:05 END
SHAGGY DOG
02:00 FS / 02:25 MF / 04:035
06:45 / 08:25 LFS
09:00 LMF / 10:40 END

SM MEGACINEMA
V FOR VENDETTA
10:30FS / 11:00 MF / 01:45
04:30/ 07:15 / 09:30LFS /
09:55 LMF / 12:10 END
SHAGGY DOG
FEARLESS
RENOVATION
THE DARK
HOUSE OF FURY
BREAKING NEWS
SHE'S THE MAN
16 BLOCKS
FINAL DESTINATION 3
CASANOVA
CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
V FOR VENDETTA
FEARLESS
HOUSE OF FURY
RESERVED
SHAGGY DOG
SHE'S THE MAN
FINAL DESTINATION 3
16 BLOCKS

SM CITY DASMARINAS
V FOR VENDETTA
AEON FLUX
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
CASANOVA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
BREAKING NEWS
YOUR'S MINE & OURS
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
16 BLOCKS
FINAL DESTINATION 3
FEARLESS
V FOR VENDETTA
SHAGGY DOG
SHE'S THE MAN
CLOSE TO YOU
THE DARK
HOUSE OF FURY

SM CITY STA. MESA
V FOR VENDETTA
SHAGGY DOG
16 BLOCKS
SHE'S THE MAN
FEARLESS
THE DARK
FINAL DESTINATION 3
HOUSE OF FURY
CLOSE TO YOU
CASANOVA

SM CITY BICUTAN
V FOR VENDETTA
CASANOVA
THE DARK
16 BLOCKS

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
V FOR VENDETTA
FINAL DESTINATION 3
SHAGGY DOG
16 BLOCKS
HOUSE OF FURY
SHE'S THE MAN

SM CITY MANILA
V FOR VENDETTA
SHE'S THE MAN
UNDERCLASS MAN
FEARLESS
SHAGGY DOG
16 BLOCKS
BREAKING NEWS
HOUSE OF FURY
FINAL DESTINATION 3
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
CLOSE TO YOU
HOUSE OF FURY

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V FOR VENDETTA
FEARLESS
SHAGGY DOG
16 BLOCKS
HOUSE OF FURY
SHE'S THE MAN
YOUR'S MINE & OURS
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SHAGGY DOG
SHE'S THE MAN
FEARLESS
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LAST HOLIDAY
FINAL DESTINATION 3
AEON FLUX
V FOR VENDETTA

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V FOR VENDETTA
CASANOVA
FINAL DESTINATION 3
CLOSE TO YOU
FEARLESS
16 BLOCKS

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BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
FEARLESS
YOURS, MINE & OURS
SAW 2

SM CITY MOLINO
V FOR VENDETTA
THE DARK
FEARLESS
TIGER BLADE

SM CITY CEBU
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
12:00FS / 12:18 / 02:36
04:54 / 07: 12 / 09:18 LFS
09 30 LMF / 11:35 END
V FOR VENDETTA
11:15FS / 11:30 MF
02 00 / 04:30
07:00 / 09:21 LFS /
09:30 LMF / 11:50 END
NEW WORLD
11:15FS / 11:30 MF
02:00 / 04:30
07:00 / 09.20 LFS
09 30 LMF / 11:50 END
CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
GOAL
16 BLOCKS
CLOSE TO YOU
FEARLESS

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO
CASANOVA
RESERVED
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
FEARLESS
V FOR VENDETTA
UNDERCLASS MAN
RESERVED
16 BLOCKS

SM CITY DAVAO
V FOR VENDETTA
FEARLESS
FIREWALL
FINAL DESTINATION 3
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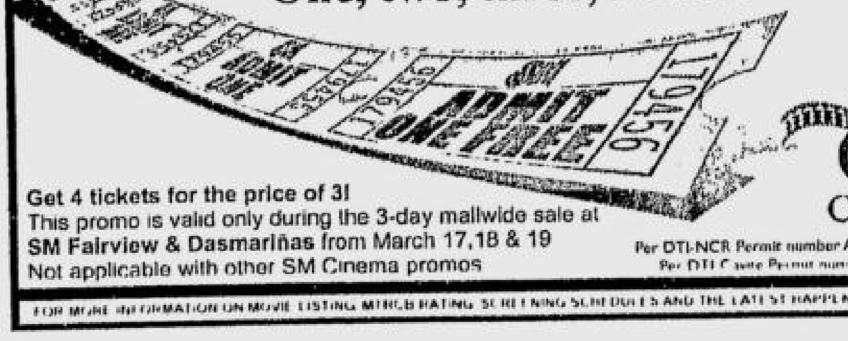

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HOUSE OF FURY 1:10 / 3:15 / 5:20 / 7:25 / 9:30	YOURS, MINE & OURS 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30	SHAGGY DOG	V FOR VENDETTA 1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00
SHE'S THE MAN 1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20	CASANOVA 7:30 / 9:50	DATE MOVIE 16 BLOCKS	ONLY P129 ADMISSION GLOBE PLATINUM P249/P299

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V FOR VENDETTA 12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00	HOSTEL 12:15 / 2:20 / 4:25 / 6:30 / 8:35	THE FEARLESS 12:00 / 2:05 / 4:10 / 6:15 / 8:20
HOUSE OF FURY 12:05 / 2:10 / 4:15 / 6:20 / 8:25	SHE'S THE MAN 12:35 / 3:15 / 5:55 / 8:35	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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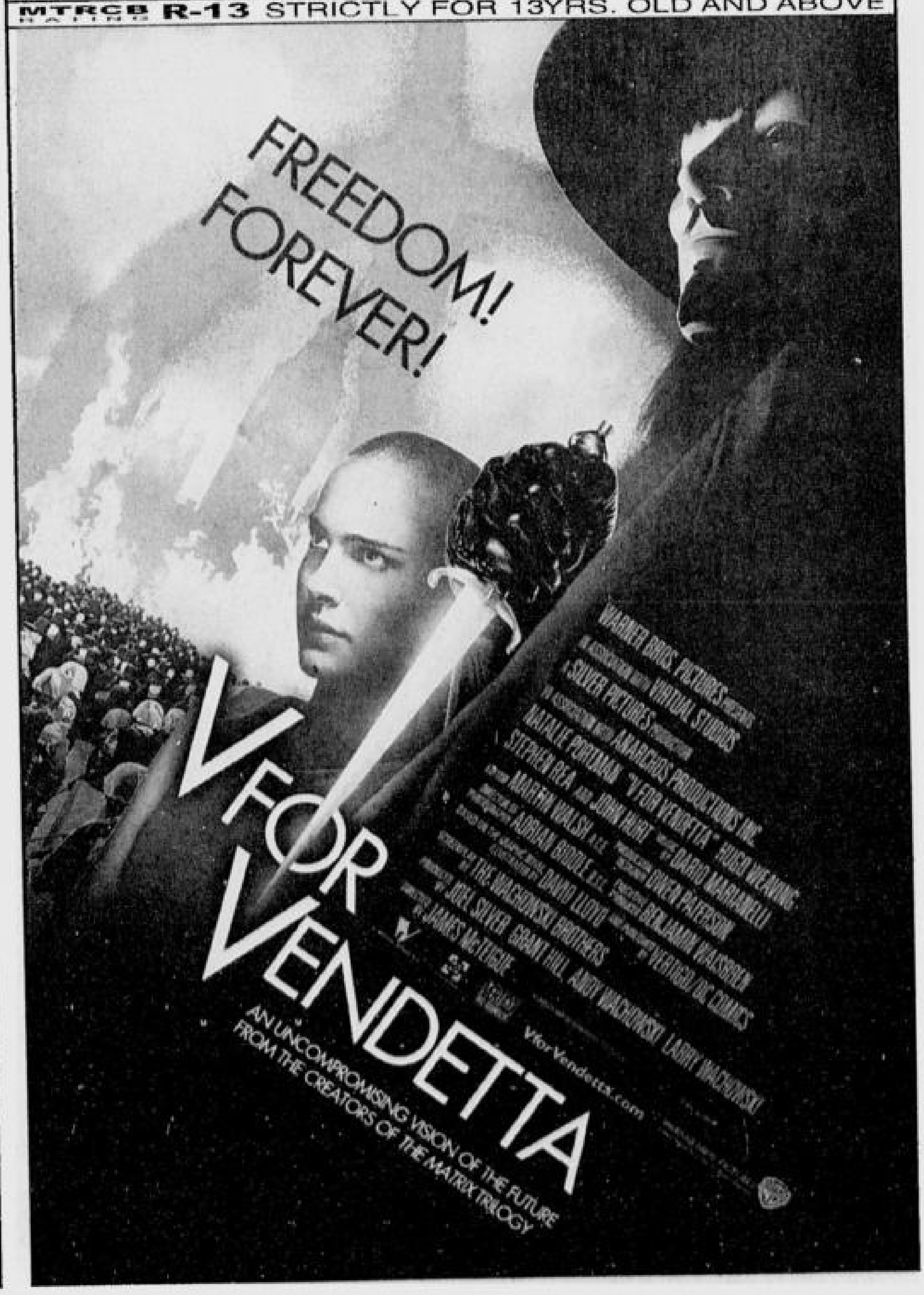

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'Sex' and the censors

HBO also has to contend with strict censorship laws

SARAH Jessica Parker is cooking up a new project with the cable channel that carried her famous series.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IT WAS NOT LOST ON "Sex and the City" fans who got to watch the "groundbreaking HBO Original Series" both on HBO Asia and the Japanese Wowow channel.

On HBO, nude and bed scenes were curiously missing; on Wowow, the risqué segments remained intact.

For the adult portion of its viewership, could HBO guarantee unabridged versions of its shows and movies?

INQUIRER Entertainment posed the question to HBO Asia executives—Christopher Ho, manager of programming, and Caroline Wong, director of marketing communications.

They explained that HBO, being a "commercial-free channel, doesn't answer to advertisers." Therefore, it is free to experiment, innovate and push the envelope, when it comes to programs that tackle "prickly and controversial" issues.

Its Emmy-winning "HBO Original Series and Movies" like "Angels in America," "Six Feet Under" and "Sex and the City" prove this point. The regular movie fare is just as bold and varied. Where else can we catch the French film "Chaos" alongside "Shrek 2"?

Exclusive

"HBO has the biggest, newest and most of the Hollywood blockbusters of 2005," said Ho. "Our exclusive output deals with major studios ensure that 70 percent of the US Top 100 box-office movies of 2005 will debut on HBO. But we also offer movies from the art-house scene and those directed by up-and-coming directors."

Shown on its "Blockbuster of the Month" and "Saturday Nights" slots are movies deemed daring in subject matter.

Premiering this month are "Ray" (last March 11) and "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason" (March 26)—the latter chronicles a bachelorette's romantic and sexual misadventures; the former tells the real-life story of iconic musician Ray Charles, including his womanizing and drug abuse.

"While we answer only to viewers," said Wong, "we respect the censorship regulations in each country. So far, most of the time, almost 100 percent of our shows make it."

Does HBO have especially edited versions of shows and movies for the Asian market?

"It all depends on [what and where]," she said. "In the end, if the story is compromised as a result of censorship, we don't show it at all."

That must be the rationale behind the familiar caveat attached to HBO's advertisements of R-rated fare like "Sex and the City" and "Six Feet Under": "Not available in all territories."

Speaking of which, for those who couldn't get enough of "Sex and, the City," star-producer Sarah Jessica Parker recently told Jon Stewart on "The Daily Show" that she was developing a new project with HBO.

Male version

"Until the dotted line is signed, we can't comment on that," the two execs said. "But something is in the works."

In the meantime, they suggested that Carrie Bradshaw fanatics catch "Entourage," a new "HBO Original Series" that, they promised, was "a male version of 'Sex and the City.'"

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3 SHE'S THE MAN 12:35, 3:05, 5:35, 8:05, 10:35 PG-13
4 HOSTEL 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 R-18

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SHE'S THE MAN 1:45,3:55,6:05, 8:15,10:25
SHAGGY DOG G 1:45,3:55,6:05, 8:15,10:20
16 BLOCKS PG13 12:30,2:50,5:10, 7:30,9:50
HOSTEL R18 1:45,3:55,6:05, 8:15,10:25
V FOR VENDETTA R13 1:50,4:40,7:30,10:20

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2 SHAGGY DOG MTRCB GP 12 20, 2 45, 5 10, 7:35 10:00 LMF
3 HOSTEL MTRCB R-18 12.40, 3:00, 5:20, 740, 1000
4 SHE'S THE MAN (Subject to MTRCB Rating) 2.00, 4.25, 6.50, 9 15
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CINEMA 4 SHAGGY DOG 10:40, 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:20 GP
CINEMA 5 V FOR VENDETTA 10:40, 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 R13
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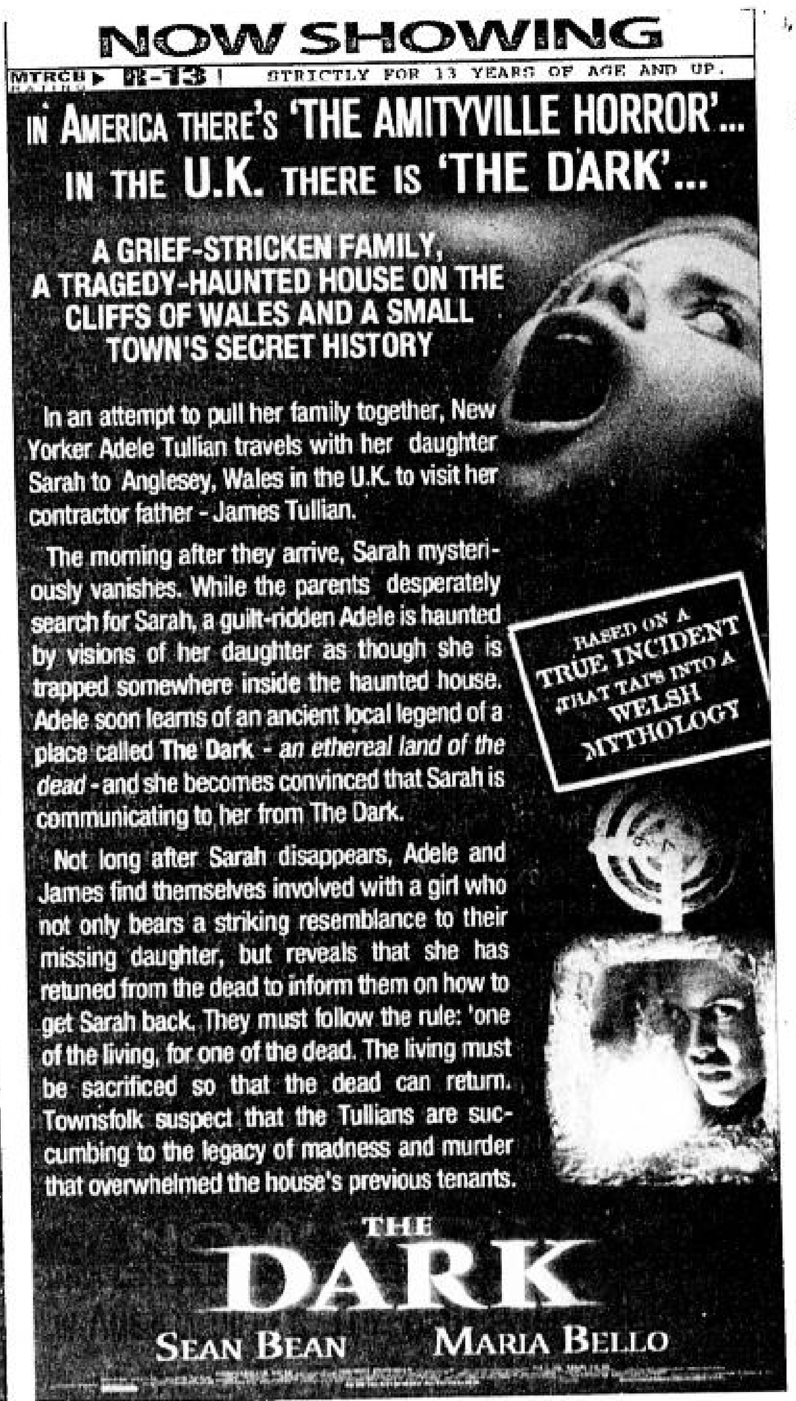

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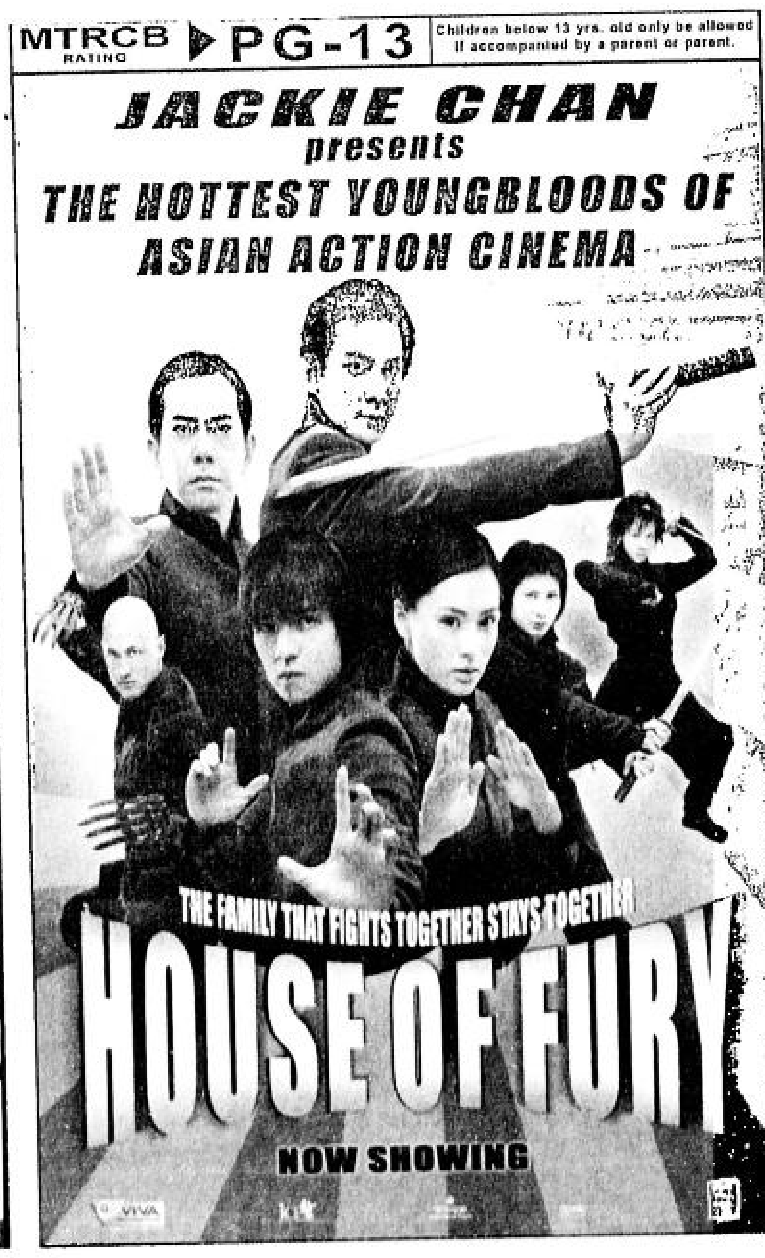
A GRIEF-STRICKEN FAMILY, A TRAGEDY-HAUNTED HOUSE ON THE CLIFFS OF WALES AND A SMALL TOWN'S SECRET HISTORY

In an attempt to pull her family together, New Yorker Adele Tullian travels with her daughter Sarah to Anglesey, Wales in the U.K. to visit her contractor father - James Tullian.

The morning after they arrive, Sarah mysteriously vanishes. While the parents desperately search for Sarah, a guilt-ridden Adele is haunted by visions of her daughter as though she is trapped somewhere inside the haunted house. Adele soon learns of an ancient local legend of a place called The Dark - *an ethereal land of the dead* - and she becomes convinced that Sarah is communicating to her from The Dark.

Not long after Sarah disappears, Adele and James find themselves involved with a girl who not only bears a striking resemblance to their missing daughter, but reveals that she has retuned from the dead to inform them on how to get Sarah back. They must follow the rule: 'one of the living, for one of the dead. The living must be sacrificed so that the dead can return. Townsfolk suspect that the Tullians are succumbing to the legacy of madness and murder that overwhelmed the house's previous tenants.

BASED ON A TRUE INCIDENT THAT TAPS INTO A WELSH MYTHOLOGY
THE DARK
SEAN BEAN MARIA BELLO



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THE FAMILY THAT FIGHTS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER
HOUSE OF FURY
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Honey - Taiwan

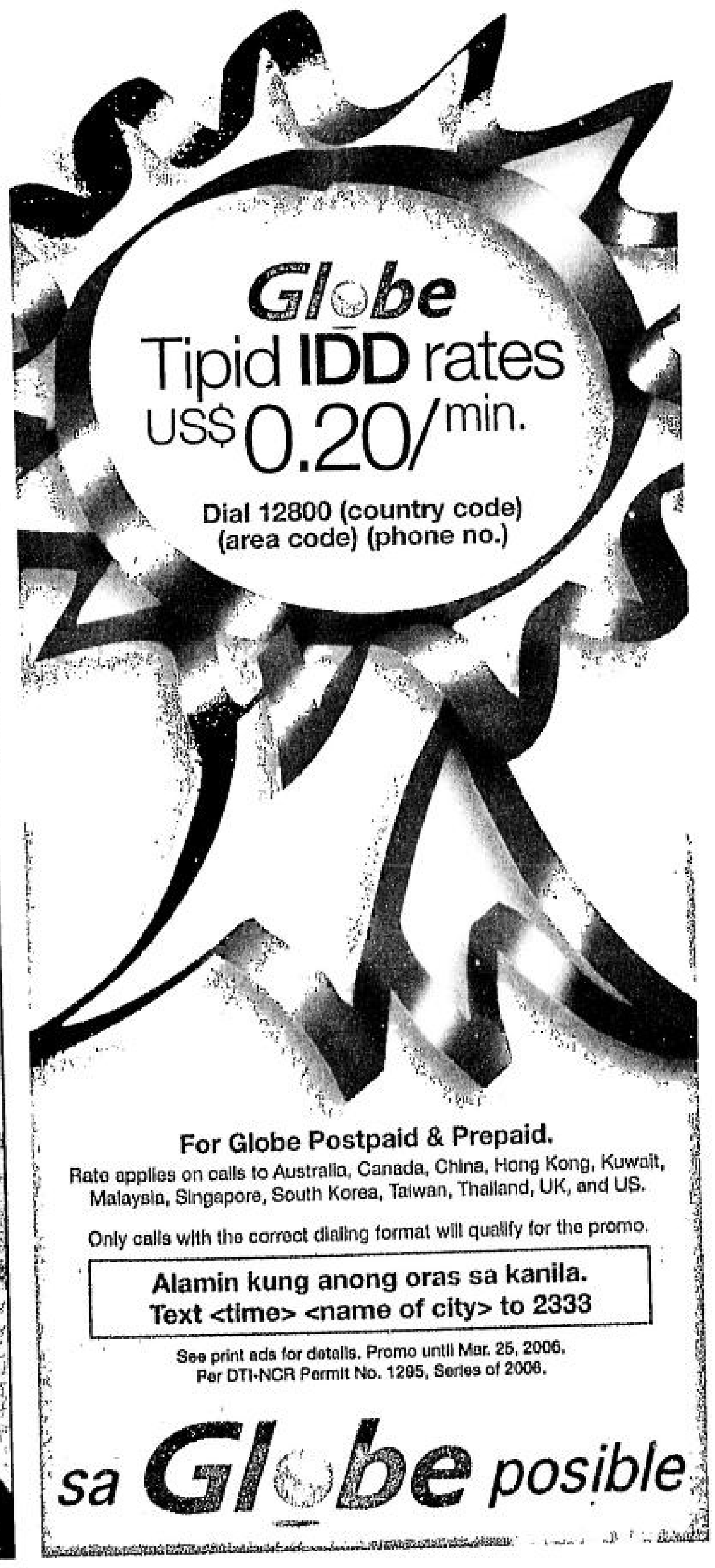
"Graduate na si bunso. Pati tayo, graduate na rin sa pagpapaaral."

9:23am
Calling...
Elsa - States

"Tapos na ang kapatid mo. Salamat at nairaos din namin kayo!"

9:32 am
Calling...
Ate - Canada

"Ate, graduate na pamangkin mo. Salamat sa mga naitulong mo."



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ROUNDUP

Dream role

HONG KONG—Jackie Chan said his dream role would be a firefighter, but he thinks he's too old to play one.

"My wish is to bring my heroes to the big screen, and many of them have already appeared in my films. The firefighter is the only one I have yet to put in a film," the 51-year-old Chan said in a posting on his official website this week.

"I have dragged this idea on for so many years, even if I want to make it, now I feel that my age makes me unsuitable," the action star said.

Highlighting his affinity for firefighters, Chan recently served as ambassador for the World Firefighters Games held in Hong Kong last month. *AP*

Moving, sir?

LONDON—US pop singer Michael Jackson may be thinking about moving to Britain after he made enquiries about purchasing a stately home in the country, a British newspaper said Sunday.

The former megastar and his three children have been staying on and off at Cliveden, a magnificent dwelling in Berkshire, southern England, for the past month, the Mail on Sunday reported.

The weekly said "it was understood" that Jackson, 47, had asked whether the mansion was up for sale, only to be told it belonged to The National Trust and was leased to a hotel group.

The star's official spokesman, however, told the newspaper: "It would surprise no one if Michael ended up staying in Britain." *AFP*

Recuperating

LONDON—Sean Connery has undergone surgery for a kidney tumor and is now recovering at home, his spokesman said Sunday.

The 75-year-old Scottish actor underwent surgery a few weeks ago in New York and is recuperating at his house in the Bahamas, spokesman James Barron said.

"He's very fit—he's 100 percent plus," Barron said of the former James Bond actor.

Connery told The Sunday Times that he "was opened in five places."

His brother, Neil, told the newspaper, "As far as I'm led to believe, the tumor was benign." *AP*

JOHN Lloyd Cruz

'Maalaala' tonight

JOHN LLOYD Cruz heads the cast of tonight's episode of ABS-CBN's "Maalaala Mo Kaya." Cruz stars as a student implicated in an on-campus frat rumble. Jerry Lopez Sineneng directs from a script by Bong Ramos.

Please don't ask me!

From page A2-1

For years after he split up with Carmina in 1997, Rustom avoided the limelight by studying filmmaking in the United States and then venturing into the cosmetics business. He returned to the country last year, the website said, to introduce to the public "the Rustom that I've always wanted them to know."

On the show, speaking in Taglish, he confessed to housemate Keanna Reeves: "I reached a point where I realized I had a different personality. I realized I was gay. Now I'm telling you, and telling the whole world—even if it's difficult because I'm not a bad person."

In an interview with the INQUIRER right after their breakup, Carmina was quoted as saying: "In fairness to him, I was not able to prove anything (that he was gay). It's all hearsay."

Wedding plans

Meanwhile, Zoren said, he intended to marry Carmina within this year.

"As far as we're concerned, we're already married," Zoren said. "But if it's a question of official documents, we still have none of that. We know that we need to work on that soon. We're studying all the legal implications, for instance, taxes and our children's status ..."

The couple's twins, Cassy and Mavy, were born in the US and carry Zoren's surname.

In "Majika," Carmina and Zoren play Garam and Ayesa, denizens of the fantasy world Saladin who escape the wrath of the wicked magician Markadan (Eddie Garcia).

According to the director Mac Alejandre, part of the "Majika" set is an existing tourist spot in Lemery, Batangas that was "blocked off" for four months just for the show. "It has existing castles and bridges. The network built hamlets inside it," Alejandre said. "We also have sets in Zambales, Antipolo, San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan. We even shot some scenes on Mount Pinatubo."

The series, co-directed by Alejandre and Eric Quizon, premieres March 20.

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1 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN • THX
2 V FOR VENDETTA
3 HOUSE OF FURY
4 SHAGGY DOG
5 HOSTEL
6 SHE'S THE MAN
7 BREAKING NEWS
8 THE DARK
9 16 BLOCKS
10 DATE MOVIE

ERMITA 536-7909 to 12
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 16 BLOCKS
THE DARK
3 SHE'S THE MAN
4 HOUSE OF FURY
5 HOSTEL
6 SHAGGY DOG
7 DATE MOVIE

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 DATE MOVIE
4 SHE'S THE MAN
5 HOSTEL
6 BREAKING NEWS
7 16 BLOCKS
8 THE DARK

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 HOUSE OF FURY
4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
5 SHAGGY DOG

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 FEARLESS
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 SHE'S THE MAN
4 SHAGGY DOG

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The Co-Ed: two girls and a boy of barely legal age are caught having sex on tape. Who are they? Why did they do it? Where are they now?
The film draws answers from the urban legends that grew around the controversial sex videos and the result is a humorous narrative with elements of mock documentary.
Leo is a 21-year old co-ed student in a prestigious college. He dreams of making and starring in his own "dirty movie" and becomes obsessed with the idea. Leo eggs her girlfriend Claire to be part of the video. She hesitates but gives in to the idea soon enough, when she finds her most compelling reason in the person of a sexy girl named Miles.

MARCH 22 to 28
MTRCB Rating: R-18

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5 AEON FLUX

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1 AEON FLUX
2 HOSTEL
3 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
4 YOURS, MINE AND OURS

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1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 LAST HOLIDAY
4 CASANOVA
5 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

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1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 MURDER
4 AEON FLUX

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2 HOSTEL
3 LAST HOLIDAY
4 CASANOVA
5 TIGER BLADE
6 SHAGGY DOG

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
5 16 BLOCKS
6 CASANOVA

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1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 NEW WORLD
4 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
5 MURDER
6 FEARLESS

ILOILO (033) 336-8070
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 CASANOVA
4 16 BLOCKS
5 FEARLESS
6 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

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2 (DOLBY) SHAGGY DOG GP
3 (DOLBY) HOSTEL R18
4 (DOLBY) SHE'S THE MAN
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) 16 BLOCKS PG13

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DTS) HOUSE OF FURY
2 (SDDS) FINAL DESTINATION
3 (DTS) DATE MOVIE
4 GOLD (DTS) HOSTEL
5 GOLD (DOLBY) SHE'S THE MAN
6 GOLD (SDDS) SHAGGY DOG
7 GOLD (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA
8 (DOLBY STEREO) FEARLESS
9 (DOLBY STEREO) CLOSE TO YOU
10 (DOLBY STEREO) 16 BLOCKS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
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1 (DOLBY) SHAGGY DOG
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3 (DOLBY) SHE'S THE MAN
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Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 YOURS MINE & OURS
4 HOSTEL

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) SHAGGY DOG
2 (DOLBY) HOSTEL
3 (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOUSE OF FURY
3 SANDAKOT NA KALIGAYAHAN
4 FEARLESS
5 HOSTEL

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 THE NEW WORLD
2 (DTS) AEON FLUX
3 (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA
4 HOSTEL
Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 (DOLBY) HOSTEL
3 (DTS) AEON FLUX
4 THE LAST HOLLIDAY
Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 FEARLESS
2 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
3 (DOLBY) AEON FLUX
Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 YOUR MINE & OURS
2 CRY WOLF
3 (DOLBY) FEARLESS
4 (DTS) BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 HOSTEL
2 16 BLOCKS
3 (DOLBY) DATE MOVIE / SYRIANA
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan)
1 FEARLESS
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 HOSTEL
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5 HOUSE OF FURY

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1 FEARLESS
2 SANDAKOT NA KALIGAYAHAN
3 TIGER BLADE
4 RESERVED

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1 HOSTEL
2 V FOR VENDETTA
3 SANDAKOT NA KALIGAYAHAN

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1 THE DARK
2 FEARLESS
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 HOSTEL

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL

Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 FEARLESS
2

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NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, Telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 FEARLESS
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 BLOODRAYNE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOSTEL
3 (DTS EX) AEON FLUX
4 BROKE BACK MOUNTAIN

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) SEX & ZEN
2 SANDAKOT NA KALIGAYAHAN
3 DAYO
4 (DTS) VISIBLE SECRET-1

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA
2 SANDAKOT NA KALIGAYAHAN
3 (DTS) HOSTEL
4 THE NEW WORLD
5 AEON FLUX

Cine Nepo (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 (DOLBY) RESERVED
4 (DTS) RESERVED

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 600-6271
1 FEARLESS
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cine Nepo (Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 MEMOIRS OF GEISHA
2 FEARLESS
3 (DOLBY) SYRIANA
4 (DTS) CLOSE TO YOU

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 AEON FLUX
2 HOSTEL
3 THE BROKE BACK MOUNTAIN
4 YOURS MINE & OURS

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SAW-2
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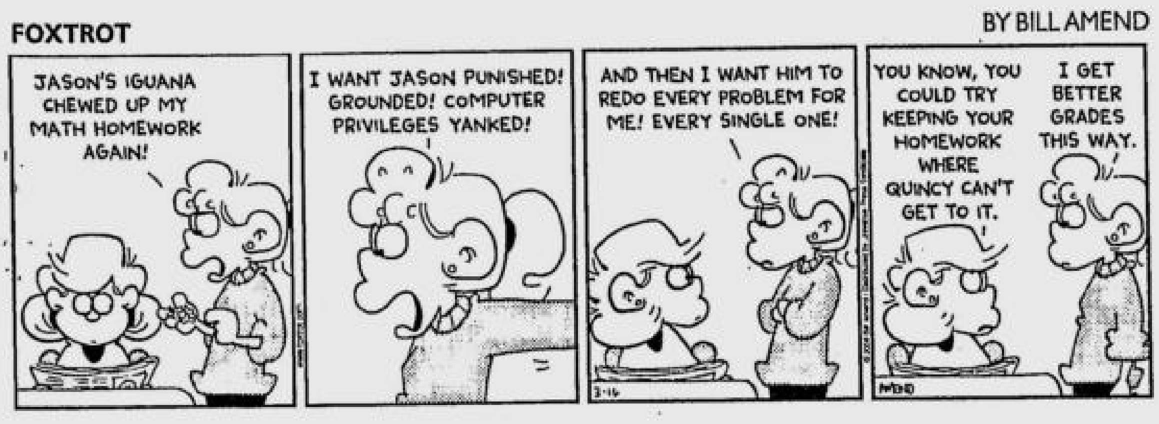
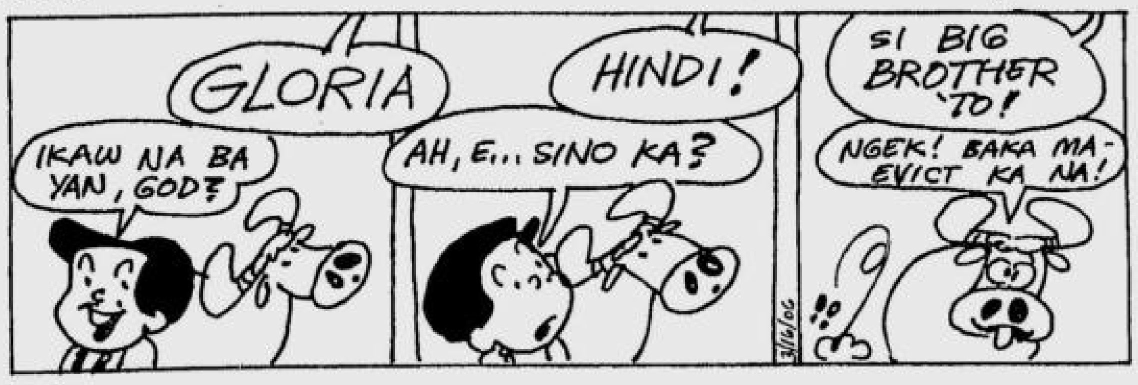
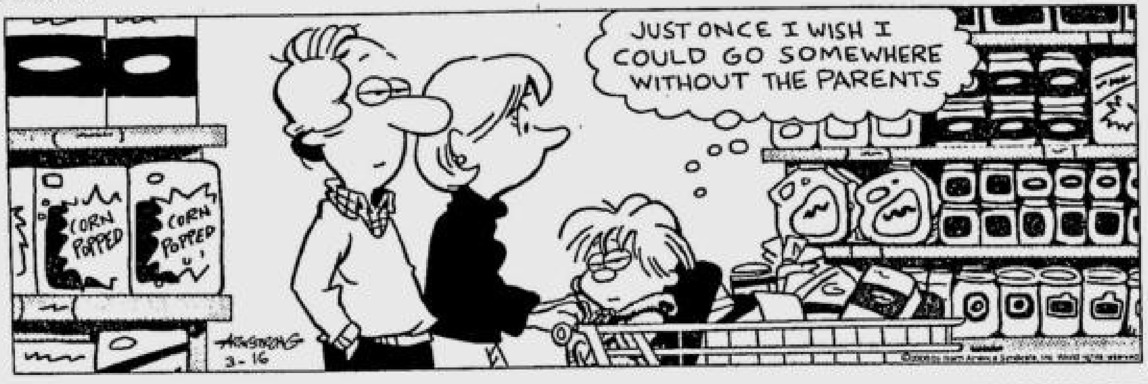
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


JASON'S IGUANA CHEWED UP MY MATH HOMEWORK AGAIN!
I WANT JASON PUNISHED! GROUNDED! COMPUTER PRIVILEGES YANKED!
AND THEN I WANT HIM TO REDO EVERY PROBLEM FOR ME! EVERY SINGLE ONE!
YOU KNOW, YOU COULD TRY KEEPING YOUR HOMEWORK WHERE QUINCY CAN'T GET TO IT.
I GET BETTER GRADES THIS WAY.
3-16

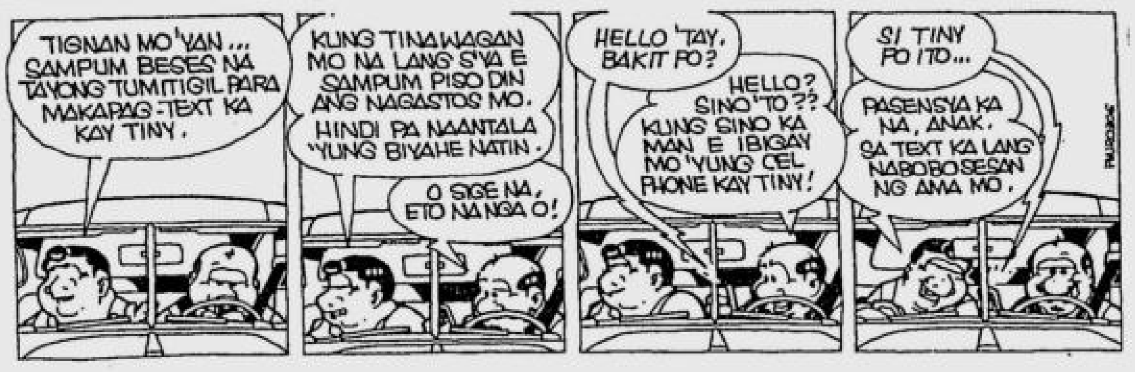
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


GLORIA
IKAW NA BA YAN, GOD?
HINDI!
AH, E... SINO KA?
SI BIG BROTHER 'TO!
NGEK! BAKA MA-EVICT KA NA!
3/16/06

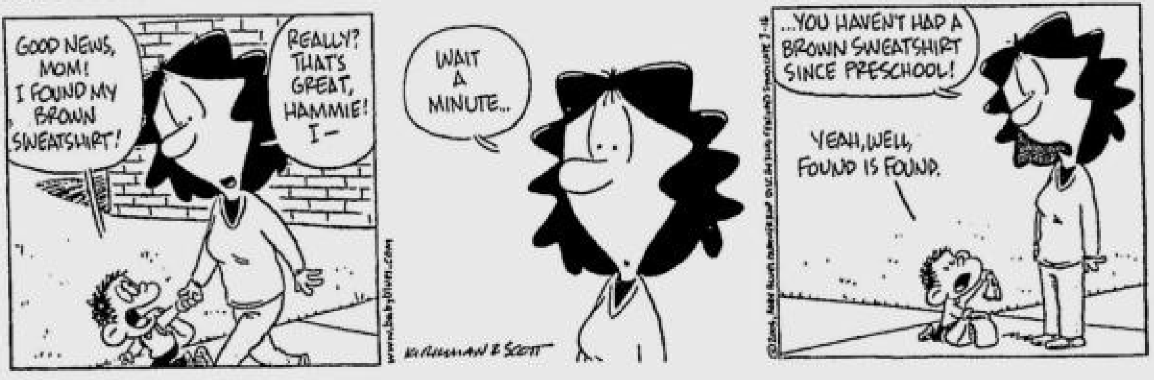
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


JUST ONCE I WISH I COULD GO SOMEWHERE WITHOUT THE PARENTS
CORN POPPED
CORN POPPED
ARMSTRONG 3-16

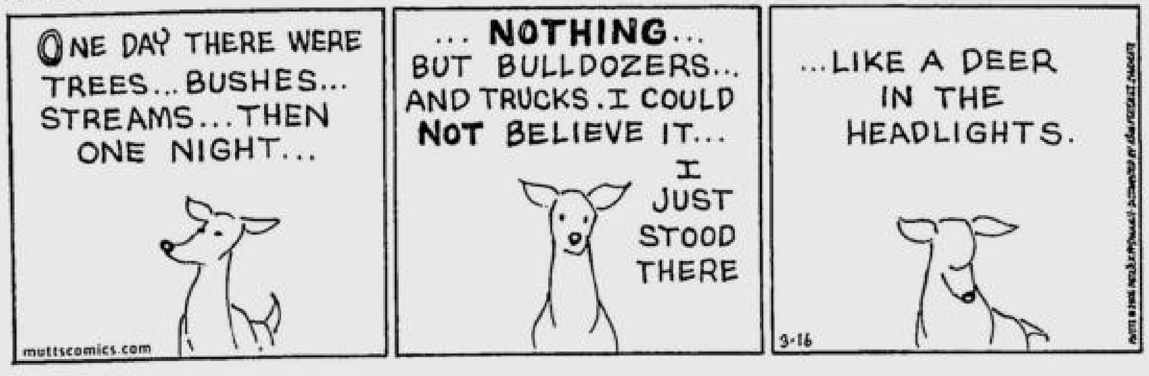
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


TIGNAN MO 'YAN... SAMPUM BESES NA TAYONG TUMITIGIL PARA MAKAPAG-TEXT KA KAY TINY.
KUNG TINAWAGAN MO NA LANG S'YA E SAMPUM PISO DIN ANG NAGASTOS MO. HINDI PA NAANTALA 'YUNG BIYAHE NATIN.
O SIGE NA, ETO NA NGA O!
HELLO 'TAY, BAKIT PO?
HELLO? SINO 'TO?? KUNG SINO KA MAN E IBIGAY MO 'YUNG CEL PHONE KAY TINY!
SI TINY PO ITO...
PASENSYA KA NA, ANAK. SA TEXT KA LANG NABOBOSESAN NG AMA MO.

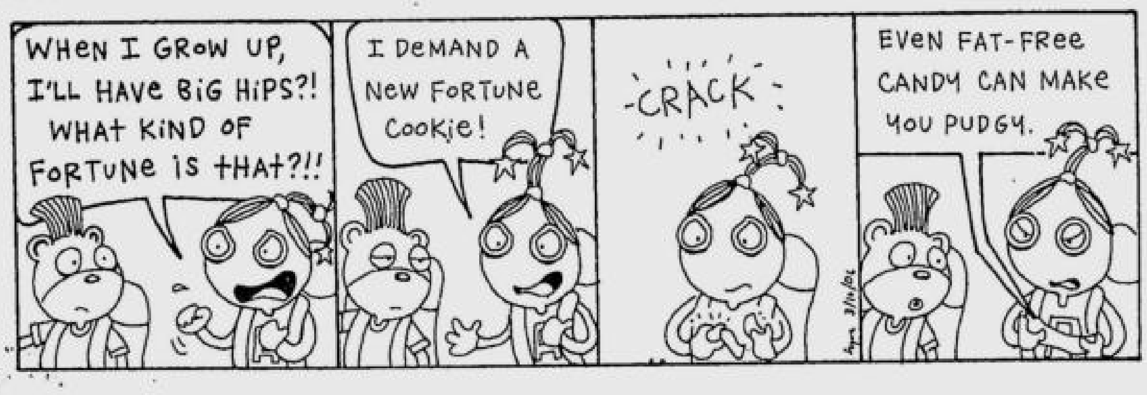
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


GOOD NEWS, MOM! I FOUND MY BROWN SWEATSHIRT!
REALLY? THAT'S GREAT, HAMMIE! I—
WAIT A MINUTE...
...YOU HAVEN'T HAD A BROWN SWEATSHIRT SINCE PRESCHOOL!
YEAH, WELL, FOUND IS FOUND.
www.babyblues.com
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

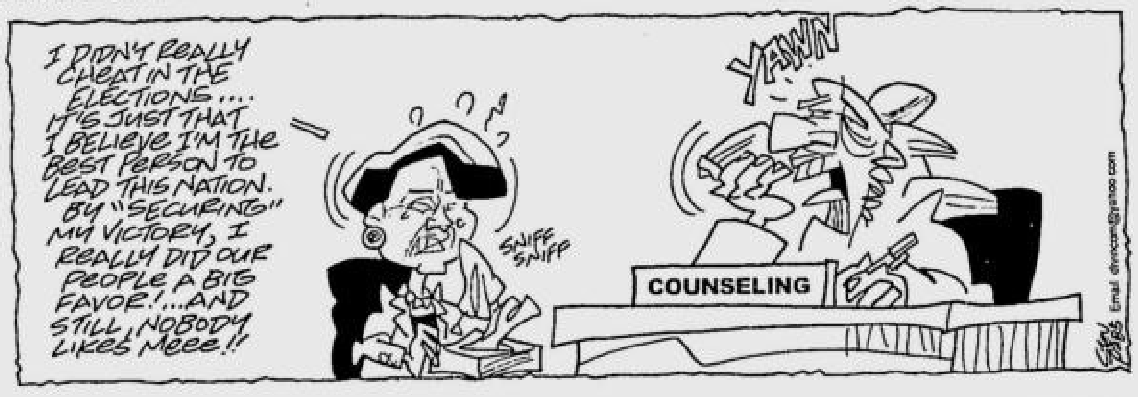
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


ONE DAY THERE WERE TREES... BUSHES... STREAMS... THEN ONE NIGHT...
... NOTHING... BUT BULLDOZERS... AND TRUCKS. I COULD NOT BELIEVE IT...
I JUST STOOD THERE
...LIKE A DEER IN THE HEADLIGHTS.
muttscomics.com
3-16

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHEN I GROW UP, I'LL HAVE BIG HIPS?! WHAT KIND OF FORTUNE IS THAT?!!
I DEMAND A NEW FORTUNE COOKIE!
-CRACK-
EVEN FAT-FREE CANDY CAN MAKE YOU PUDGY.

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


I DIDN'T REALLY CHEAT IN THE ELECTIONS.... IT'S JUST THAT I BELIEVE I'M THE BEST PERSON TO LEAD THIS NATION. BY "SECURING" MY VICTORY, I REALLY DID OUR PEOPLE A BIG FAVOR!...AND STILL, NOBODY LIKES MEEE!!
SNIFF SNIFF
YAWN
COUNSELING

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're very clever! You are both highly imaginative and practical. You feel good inside your skin. This self-confidence can bring out the best in others. You succeed because you can see what others want and how they think. This year is the time to let go of certain cycles in your life to create room for something new.
Birthdate of: Bernardo Bertolucci, director; Jerry Lewis, comedian/actor; Erik Estrada, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You'll have to go more than halfway when dealing with others today. That's because the Moon is directly opposite your sign. Just decide to cooperate.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a good day to tidy up loose ends at work. Someone might seek you out for a quiet, confidential conversation. Be sincere and sympathetic.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a fun-loving, flirtatious day. You feel a bit prankish. Enjoy yourself. Take a long lunch. Play hooky if you can. It's a play day!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Focus on home, family and real estate matters today. Discussions with a parent could be significant. Listen carefully to family members.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is the day for busy little errands, short trips and taking care of tasks you've put off. Clean up what's on your plate. Multitask whenever you can.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Make friends with your bank account today. This is a good day to stay on top of your finances, pay bills and reduce your loans. It's also a good day to shop.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The Moon is in your sign today, and this makes you a bit more emotional. However, it also brings you a little bit of good luck. You have the edge over everyone else!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You need some peace and quiet today. Work alone if you can, or work behind the scenes. Don't push yourself. This is a good day to rest or take a nap.

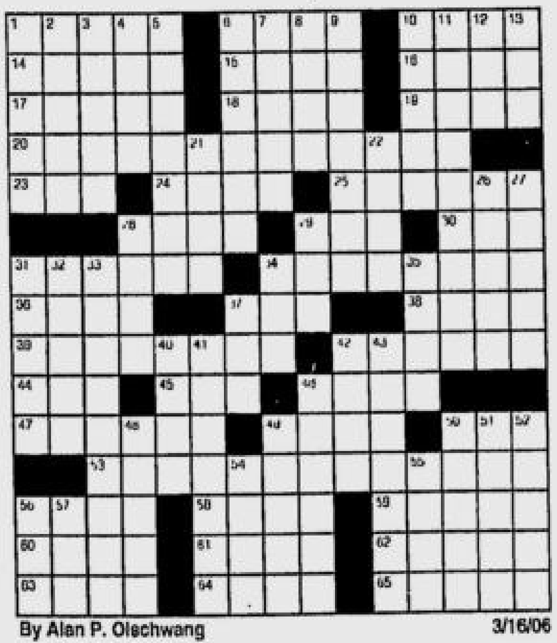
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Conversations with a female friend will be significant today. Be open to anyone who approaches you. Someone wants to talk to you. (Or maybe you want to talk to someone!)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You'll briefly be in the limelight today. Bosses and VIPs notice you now. Make sure you make a good impression. (Make hay while the sun shines.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Don't worry if you feel restless today. You want adventure! You want something different to happen. Go someplace you've never been before in order to satisfy this urge.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might want to examine your partner's earnings or how somebody else is handling shared property or anything you have an interest in. Make sure you know what's going on.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
3/16/06

ACROSS
1 Abandon
6 Customs
10 Verbal skirmish
14 Musical refrain
15 Skeptic's retort
16 Jason's ship
17 Rough customer
18 Brown quickly
19 Bolshevik Trotsky
20 Start of Jules Renard quote
23 For each
24 Galena and mispickel
25 Race officials
28 Rosebud, e.g.
29 Math letters
30 Stephen or Chris
31 Paper fastener
34 Part 2 of quote
36 Cartoonist Peter
37 Snakelike fish
38 Three-piece suit piece
39 Part 3 of quote
42 Meadowsweet
44 Luau garland
45 Corrida cry
46 Jubilant
47 Republica Portuguesa neighbor
49 Lovebirds' words?
50 Iron-pumper's pride
53 End of quote
56 Lucy's love
58 Soft drink
59 Writer Zola
60 Utah ski resort
61 Pitcher in picture?
62 Shirt size
63 People flicks
64 Flit
65 Villain's expression

DOWN
1 Razor sharpener
2 Old hag
3 More inexperienced
4 Alan of "The West Wing"
5 Business expense item
6 Desired
7 Aids in wrongdoing
8 Slangy OK
9 Final straightaway
10 Witch trial locale
11 Mothballs or brine
12 Earlier
13 2,000 pounds
21 Ginkgo or palm
22 Vehicular journey
26 Actress Witherspoon
27 __ Fe, NM
28 Espy
29 Online chuckle
31 Weasellike mammal
32 Makes flush
33 Italian appetizer
34 Born as
35 Eager
37 Before, before
40 Sharpen
41 Passed
42 Blackthorn
43 Heaps
46 Mini-racer
48 Met highlights
49 Closet liner
50 Blazing
51 Hogwash
52 Bum chaser?
54 Skunk River state
55 Middle Eastern sultanate
56 Small amount
57 Mr. Whitney

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

E	D	I	N	A	■	V	A	G	U	E	■	F	E	R
S	O	N	A	R	■	A	T	O	L	L	■	E	D	O
P	E	E	P	E	R	S	M	O	M	A	N	D	E	D
■	■	R	A	C	E	S	■	■	■	N	A	O	M	I
I	T	T	■	A	L	A	S	K	A	■	B	R	A	N
M	A	I	D	■	■	R	H	I	N	E	■	A	S	S
P	L	A	I	D	S	■	A	N	I	M	A	■	■	■
■	C	L	E	A	N	A	N	D	L	U	C	K	Y	■
■	■	■	S	T	E	I	N	■	E	S	T	E	E	M
C	P	A	■	A	R	D	O	R	■	■	S	Y	N	C
H	A	L	O	■	T	E	N	E	T	S	■	P	S	I
A	G	I	L	E	■	■	■	H	I	N	D	U	■	■
R	O	B	E	R	T	S	M	O	T	O	A	N	D	T
M	D	I	■	N	O	T	E	S	■	O	N	C	U	E
S	A	S	■	S	T	U	N	T	■	T	E	H	E	E

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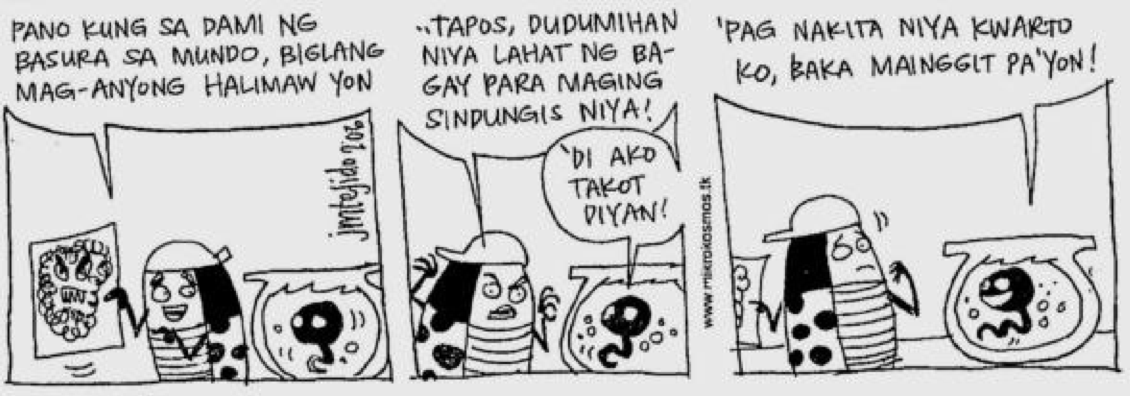
3/16/06

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PANO KUNG SA DAMI NG BASURA SA MUNDO, BIGLANG MAG-ANYONG HALIMAW YON
..TAPOS, DUDUMIHAN NIYA LAHAT NG BAGAY PARA MAGING SINDUNGIS NIYA!
'DI AKO TAKOT DIYAN!
'PAG NAKITA NIYA KWARTO KO, BAKA MAINGGIT PA'YON!
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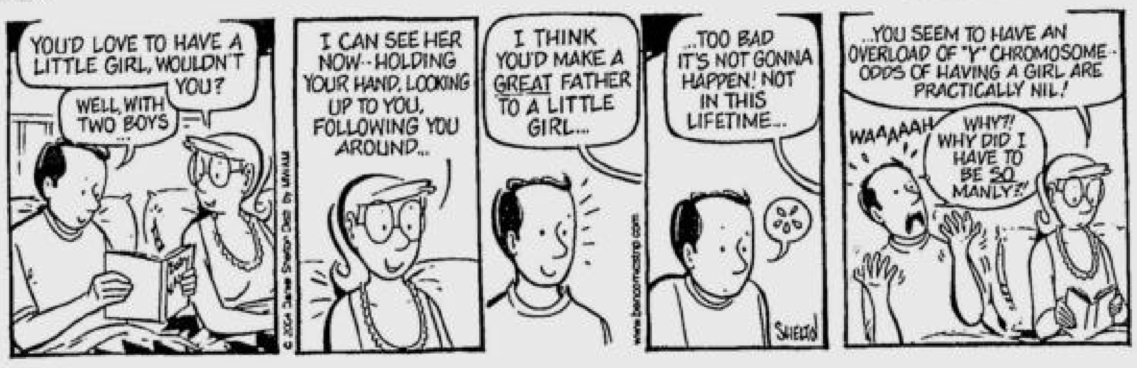
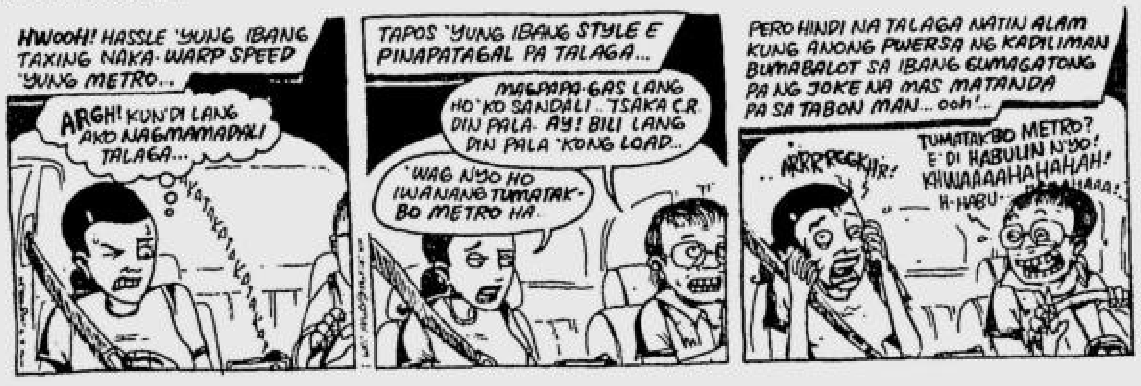
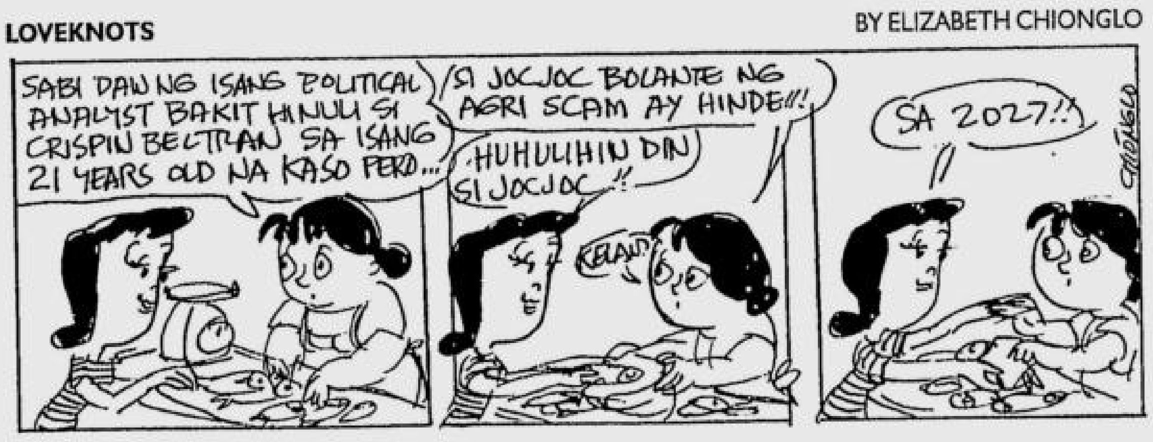
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU'D LOVE TO HAVE A LITTLE GIRL, WOULDN'T YOU?
WELL, WITH TWO BOYS ...
I CAN SEE HER NOW--HOLDING YOUR HAND, LOOKING UP TO YOU, FOLLOWING YOU AROUND...
I THINK YOU'D MAKE A GREAT FATHER TO A LITTLE GIRL...
...TOO BAD IT'S NOT GONNA HAPPEN! NOT IN THIS LIFETIME...
...YOU SEEM TO HAVE AN OVERLOAD OF "Y" CHROMOSOME--ODDS OF HAVING A GIRL ARE PRACTICALLY NIL!
WAAAAAH
WHY?! WHY DID I HAVE TO BE SO MANLY?!
SHELTON

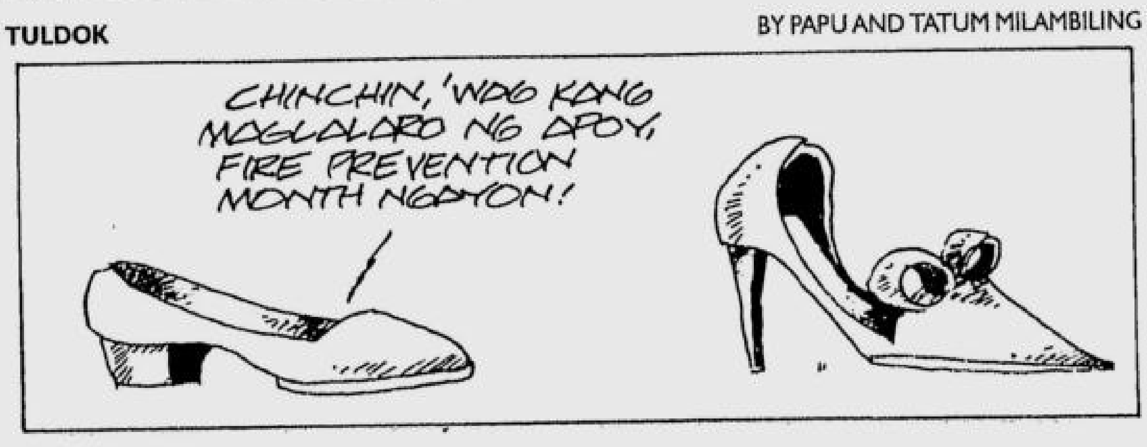
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOH! HASSLE 'YUNG IBANG TAXING NAKA-WARP SPEED 'YUNG METRO...
ARGH! KUN'DI LANG AKO NAGMAMADALI TALAGA...
TAPOS 'YUNG IBANG STYLE E PINAPATAGAL PA TALAGA...
MAGPAPA-GAS LANG HO 'KO SANDALI.. TSAKA C.R. DIN PALA. AY! BILI LANG DIN PALA 'KONG LOAD...
'WAG N'YO HO IWANANG TUMATAKBO METRO HA.
PERO HINDI NA TALAGA NATIN ALAM KUNG ANONG PWERSA NG KADILIMAN BUMABALOT SA IBANG GUMAGATONG PA NG JOKE NA MAS MATANDA PA SA TABON MAN... ooh!...
..ARRRGGHR!
TUMATAKBO METRO? E' DI HABULIN N'YO! KHWAAAAAHAHAHAH!
H-HABU-

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SABI DAW NG ISANG POLITICAL ANALYST BAKIT HINULI SI CRISPIN BELTRAN SA ISANG 21 YEARS OLD NA KASO PERO...
SI JOCJOC BOLANTE NG AGRI SCAM AY HINDE!!!
HUHULIHIN DIN SI JOCJOC!!
KELAN?
SA 2027!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING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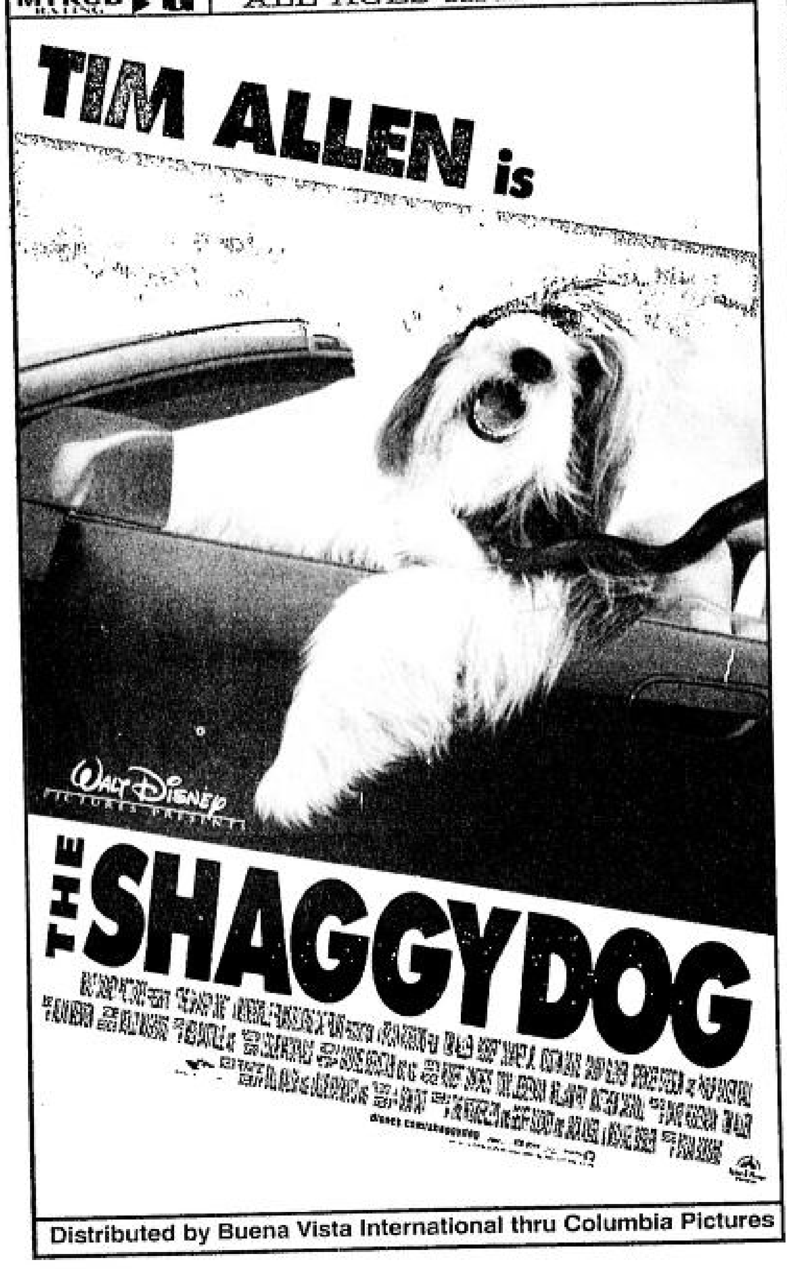

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

DEBBIE Harry performs with Blondie after the band induction.

New in rock hall of fame

NEW YORK—AN UGLY FEUD AMONG Blondie members spilled over onstage and the Sex Pistols sent a rancorous letter. The latest Rock and Roll Hall of Fame class did not enter quietly.

The animosity even made Ozzy Osbourne, inducted with Black Sabbath, seem sedate.

Monday at the Waldorf-Astoria's grand ballroom, Lynyrd Skynyrd performed the song that launched countless cigarette lighters, "Free Bird," to celebrate their own induction. Famed jazz trumpeter Miles Davis completed the honorees.

Punk rockers the Sex Pistols had turned down the honor in a profane letter that compared the hall to "urine in wine." Rolling Stone magazine founder Jann Wenner read the letter, and invited the band to pick up their trophies at the rock hall in Cleveland.

"If they want to smash them into bits, they can do that, too," Wenner said.

Osbourne may be better known now as an addled reality TV star, but his musical legacy with Black Sabbath got its due with the band's induction.

Davis was inducted by fellow jazz musician Herbie Hancock.

Southern rockers Skynyrd made much of its memorable music before a 1977 plane crash killed singer Ronnie Van Zant and guitarist Steve Gaines.

"No one deserved to be here more than Ronnie Van Zant," said his widow Judy, "and he would truly be honored."

The hall also is giving a lifetime achievement award to Herb Alpert and Jerry Moss, founders of the influential A&M Records label.

Inductees are honored at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum in Cleveland. Highlights of the 21st annual ceremony will be shown on VH1 on March 21. *AP*

Lovers' quarrel or dead end?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

AFTER ADMITTING ON NATIONAL TV THAT they're hopelessly in love, are **Alicia Mayer** and **Joey Marquez** headed for Splitsville? A GMA 7 insider told me that during the taping of "Lagot Ka … Isusumbong Kita" last Friday, the lovers did not talk to each other. The "dedmahan" continued to the taping for "Hocus Pocus" on Tuesday. Is it just another lovers' quarrel or have they reached a dead end? It wouldn't surprise me if a third party surfaced as the cause of the breakup. Party over, Pareng Joey?

Reunited

"Majika," GMA 7's newest *telefantasya*, unfolds on March 20, reuniting **Angel Locsin** and **Dennis Trillo** who were last seen together in the record-breaking TV remake of "Darna."

Angel and Dennis almost fell in love many heartbeats ago but friendship prevailed over love. Their on-screen chemistry creates a mirage of being lovers. What could be more magical than that?

Angel admits that her boyfriend Oyo Boy Sotto suffers intermittent pangs of jealousy. Whenever the trailer of "Majika" is aired, she warns him, "The kissing scene is up next. Close your eyes!"

I asked the two lead stars what magical power they'd like to have. Angel said: "To be invisible at will—like when I do something embarrassing!"

As for Dennis: "To turn back time so I can correct my mistakes. I'd like to travel back to my high school days. I'm happy now but I can't afford to be carefree anymore, unlike when I was a student."

Eric Quizon, who co-directs with **Mac Alejandre**, explained how "Majika" is more challenging than "Darna": "Darna is already a brand, part of Pinoy culture. 'Majika' is a new concept that we still need to sell. Second, the work is more tedious since we are dealing with a heavily effects-laiden concept (magic). It's like doing 'Harry Potter' on a daily basis. Third, our group is coming from the success of 'Darna' so there is pressure to come up with an even better show. Lastly, as a director I'd like to improve my work and 'Darna' is a tough act to follow. But the challenge makes me want to excel."

(E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.)

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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 SHAGGY DOG	2 HOSTEL	3 THX V FOR VENDETTA 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 YOURS, MINE & OURS	5 16 BLOCKS	6 SHE'S THE MAN	7 DATE MOVIE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 16 BLOCKS	2 V FOR VENDETTA		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX SHE'S THE MAN 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX V FOR VENDETTA 2:40, 5:30, 8:20, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 16 BLOCKS 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 DATE MOVIE 2:00, 3:4, 5:30, 7:15, 9:00, 10:45 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 HOSTEL 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:00, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX V FOR VENDETTA	2 SHE'S THE MAN		
	3 SHAGGY DOG	4 YOURS, MINE & OURS	5 HOSTEL	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 V FOR VENDETTA	2 HOSTEL	3 PRIDE & PREJUDICE	4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 V FOR VENDETTA	2 HOSTEL		
	3 HOUSE OF FURY	4 SHE'S THE MAN	5 SHAGGY DOG	

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OFW remittances surge 16.5% to $917M

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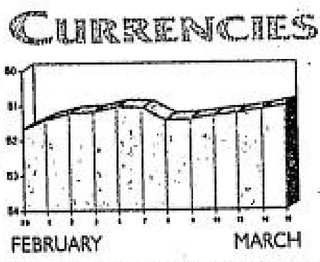


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 51.05 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., March 15, 2006

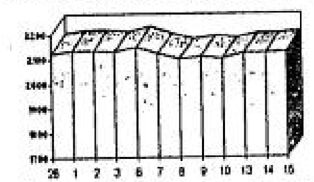
¥ 117.52 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., March 15, 2006

GOLD: $550.60-551.10

per ounce Hong Kong, March 15, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B3)

Shares close 0.33% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.33 PERcent higher, supported by gains on Wall Street and around the region, dealers said.

They said SM Investments led the winners after reporting strong profits for calendar 2005.

The composite index was up 6.92 points to

SHARES/ B5

BSP notes workers' appetite for acquiring property

By Doris C. Dumlao

REMITTANCES FROM OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS that had been coursed through banks surged by 16.5 percent in January to $917 million from $787 million a year ago on the back of increasing appetite to invest in local property assets.

"Information gathered from commercial banks indicates an increasing amount of remittances used for direct payments of investments in Philippine assets, such as real estate and condominiums," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a press statement yesterday

He said the continuing rise in remittances, despite a slowdown in the deployment of new workers abroad, could also be attributed to the efficiency of remittance services and intensified marketing campaign by commercial banks to capture the OFW remittance market.

"Commercial banks stepped up their drive to service the banking needs of the growing number of Filipinos working overseas, which include ... faster means of remittance transfers and more remittance centers and tie-ups abroad," Tetangco said.

The major sources of remittances are still the United States, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Japan, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, and Singapore.

OFW remittances coursed through banks hit a historic high of $10.7 billion in 2005, up 25 percent from inflows of the previous year.

Citing preliminary data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Tetangco said that for the

OFW/ B5

Peso reaches 51.01:$1 in intra-day trade, closes at 51.05

THE PESO YESTERDAY ALMOST touched 51:$1 during the day's trading, beefed up by prospects of higher remittances from overseas Filipino workers, currency traders said.

The strong closing of the peso, which sailed alongside bullish Asian currency markets, and the robust build-up of the country's foreign exchange reserves, has encouraged the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to announce the prepayment by this April of $500 million worth of debts six months ahead of maturity.

International Exchange Bank treasurer Edmundo Bunyi Jr. said the strengthening peso would likewise allow the BSP to hold off further increases in its overnight rates for the rest of the year.

The local currency yesterday traded between an intra-day high of 51.01 and a low of 51.10 before firming up at 51.05, better than Tuesday's closing of 51.14 against the US dollar.

"The peso is firmer due to across-the-board US dollar weakness on soft US economic data and slack in dollar demand," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

The dollar yesterday fell across major currencies due to a disappointing unemployment data in the United States, which prompted analysts to scale back expectations on how much the US Federal Reserve would hike rates this year.

PESO/ B5

WHAT'S INSIDE

RP jobless rate rose to 8.1% in Jan. /B2

P3.2-B bulk handling facility to open /B5

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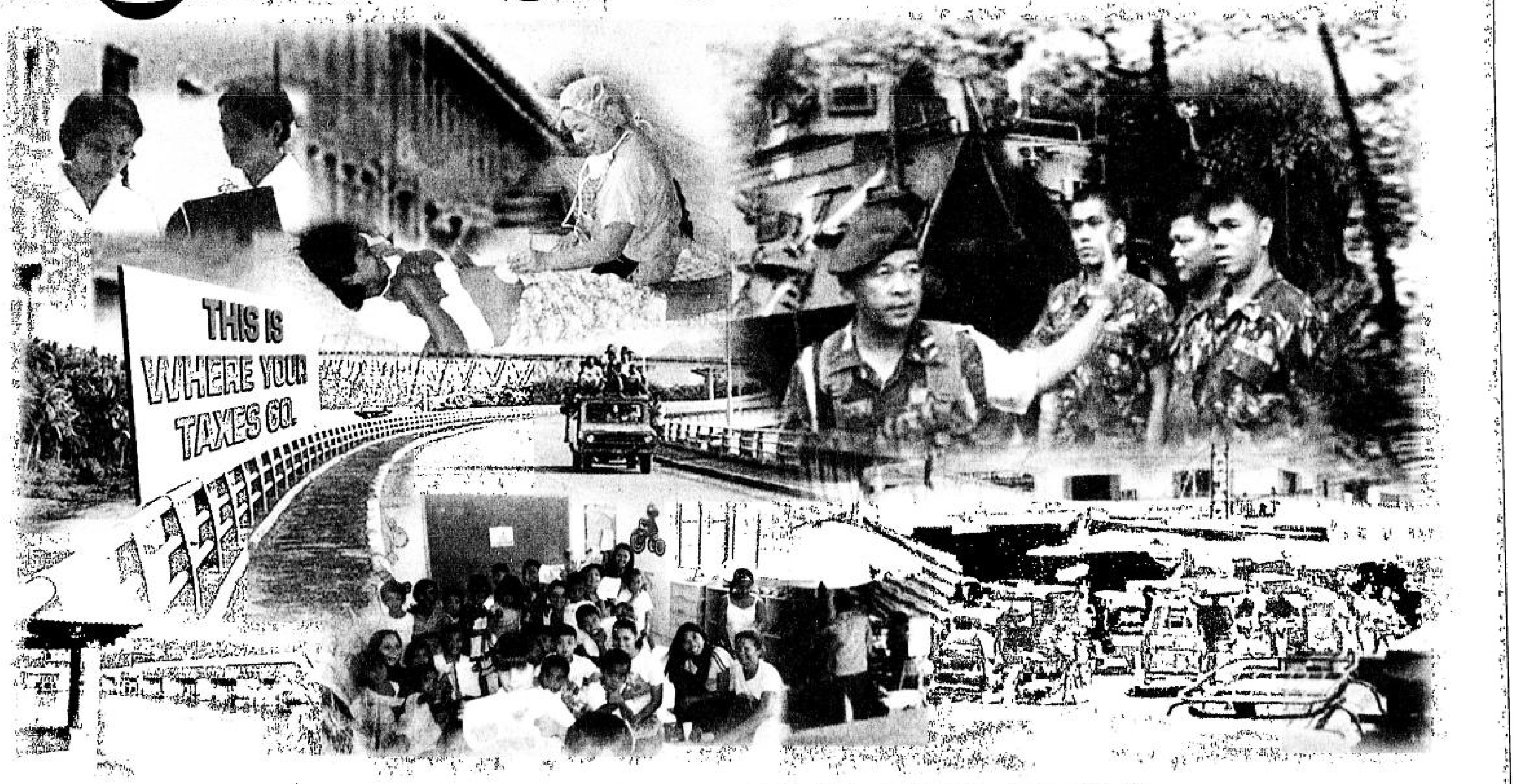
bago ang April 17 deadline.



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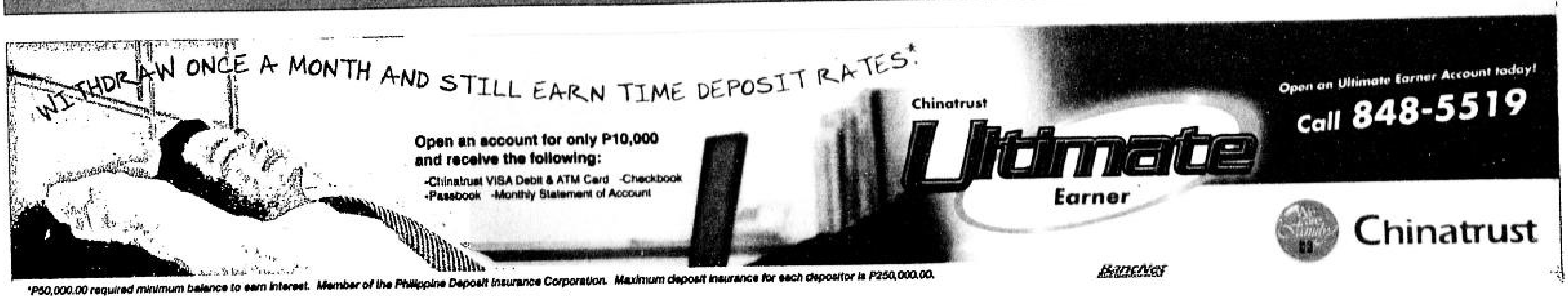

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RP jobless rate rose to 8.1% in Jan.

Construction, manufacturing sectors ordered biggest job cuts, NSO says

By Doris C. Dumlao

JOB CUTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND manufacturing sectors swelled the ranks of the unemployed to 8.1 percent of the labor force in January from 7.4 percent in October last year.

Some 73,000 in the construction sector lost their jobs, along with 38,000 from the manufacturing sector, which accounts for 70 percent of industrial output.

Nearly half of the unemployed were aged 15 to 24 years.

During the month, there were 649,000 Filipinos looking for work, representing 47 percent of the unemployed.

More than half, on the other hand, did not look for work in January.

The NSO conducts its labor force survey four times a year, in January, April, July and October.

Despite the rise in the jobless rate, the NSO said the Philippine labor market even improved as the employment level had expanded by 2.4 percent or 750,000 in January from 31.6 million in January last year.

A big contributor was the agriculture sector, which hired 4.2 percent more workers in January.

Services employment also rose by 373,000 with all sectors posting positive job growth except health and social work, which recorded a decline of 32,000.

Across regions, Cagayan Valley recorded the highest employment rate at 96.8 percent while the National Capital Region reported 85 percent.

Meanwhile, the number of underemployed persons or those looking for more work increased to 6.9 million in January from 5.1 million a year ago.

Thus, the underemployment rate spiked to 21.3 percent from 16.1 percent a year ago.

The country's labor force participation rate remained at two-thirds of the total population.

The remaining one-third of the population not in the labor force, consisted mostly of housewives, the disabled, students, and retired persons.

In Malacañang, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the government's pump-priming activities this year should open up more job opportunities for unemployed Filipinos.

He said Presidential Adviser for Job Creation Arthur Yap was working on a strategy to create new jobs, such as through the rehabilitation of agricultural facilities in the countryside.

Tactic tow

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THE FINAL BATTLEGROUND FOR control of the country's third largest bank, Equitable PCI Bank, has shifted to the Social Security System.

It seems that the SM group of mall developer Henry Sy is trying to get rid of SSS officials who, on record, are against its designs to take over EPCIB.

Under the scheme of Henry Sy's daughter Tessie Sy Coson, SM group's Banco de Oro, ranked 9th largest, is to absorb EPCIB, the 3rd largest, without the SM group having to shell out a single centavo to the other EPCIB stockholders.

Now, the SSS is the single biggest stockholder of EPCIB, and its top officials, naturally, are in this tic-tac-toe match, with EPCIB on the line.

Still, SSS insiders told me that SSS management, including a couple of commission members, was basically against the deal.

Suddenly, there was this text message, purportedly circulating among the staff of Gloriaetta—i.e. Office of the President.

The message said that SSS chair Thelmo Cunanan, the retired general who also happens to be the husband of INQUIRER columnist Belinda Cunanan, would soon be transferred to another office.

Whadayano—the former military man is against the "merger", which is actually a virtual takeover.

***

UNABASHEDLY in favor of the merger nevertheless, is the absentee president-CEO of the SSS, the former auditor named Corazon de la Paz.

And that's on record. De la Paz hardly shows up at the SSS head office in Quezon City, not for the executive committee meetings, and not for the commission meetings.

So what does she do?

Well, she travels a lot—on SSS expense account, of course—as she claims to take care of the affairs of an international association that elected her president.

So much so that, apparently to cover for her chronic absenteeism, De la Paz hired highly paid "consultants". Not just one, but THREE.

Insiders told me that the lucky guys are Arturo San Gabriel, Luisito Sioson, and Nazario Cabuquit.

Each gets a monthly pay of about P150,000, plus the usual "perks" of sitting on the boards of companies where SSS has shares.

And they only do the things that De la Paz, as president, should be doing in the first place.

De la Paz, from what I gathered, is again out of the country this month. For the WHOLE month, okay!

And yet, even with her obvious lack of concern for SSS business, she wants to be on top of the SM group takeover proposal.

Why this mysteriously unusual attention, is the hottest topic among SSS employees.

For De la Paz uses all sorts of tactics to tow the millions of SSS members toward the SM group's takeover of EPCIB for a song.

***

ONE of them was her election as chair of the bank, as an "ally" of the SM group of course. Even inside the SSS, they see a huge conflict of interest there.

She used the SSS shares in the bank to get to the board, right? Now whose interest will she, as chair, prioritize? The interest of the bank or of the SSS? They are not one and the same.

For one, the interest of the bank can be just the interest of other stockholders, such as the SM group.

For example, there's a missing P16 billion from the bank, which the former partners of SSS, the Go family, were supposed to put in it.

It was discovered later that the Go family used the money instead.

De la Paz volunteered to do an audit of the missing P1 billion. That was several months ago. Up to now, De la Paz still has to say a single word about what happened to the P16 billion of EPCIB funds.

I submit that the bank needs those funds. Why, even the SM group is insisting on a "capital call." Instead of this scheme, which can only dilute the SSS holdings, De la Paz should be finding ways for the bank to get back that P16 billion.

The only way is for the SM group to cover the missing P16 billion, since the SM group bought out the Go family. It's only right.

The problem is, the audit team of De la Paz is taking forever to find out what really happened.

That, given her actions on the SM group deal, was most probably done on purpose!

***

SSS employees can only wonder why this cute administration of Gloriaetta even bothers to keep De la Paz at the SSS.

Last year, at the height of the oust-Gloriaetta-movement, De la Paz signed the Makati Business Club resolution calling for the resignation of Gloriaetta. She did not even have the decency to resign like the "Hyatt 12."

So why is De la Paz still the president of SSS? Whispers in the SSS point to somebody in the Palace for tolerating this scandalous arrangement.

Keeping De la Paz is the Palace tactic to help the SM group get EPCIB for a song.

Actually, somebody in Palace was seen in the Canyon Woods rest house of a Sy family member before the last elections.

Remember, too, that there are two "godfathers" working for the SM group, both of them close to Gloriaetta, even related.

Now, reports have said that the GSIS was inviting the SM group to sell their EPCIB holdings for P94 a share, or at more than 50 percent premium over the market price, meaning the SM group makes an instant killing.

Why can't the SSS itself, instead of the SM group, jump on such an enviable prospect?

You know—for the sake of its millions of members. Well, simply put, De la Paz has other commitments.

Guam woos RP business

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE US GOVERNMENT TERRITORY OF Guam is trying to woo Filipino businessmen to invest in the Pacific island in anticipation of an economic boom brought about by a US military build up.

Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, Guam Governor Felix P. Camacho said that the real estate and construction sectors were particularly attractive to Filipino investors.

He said as many as 7,000 officers and enlisted personnel of the US Marine Corps were expected to be soon relocated to Guam, marking the single largest movement of US Marine troops since World War II.

"With their dependents, the total will rise to 16,000 which is already a 10-percent increase in our population," he said.

This means more houses, more buildings, and more condominium units will have to be built to accommodate the transferees, he said.

At present, he said there were not enough housing units and support services, like entertainment centers and commercial establishments, to accommodate the expected influx of people.

Camacho added that the US Air Force and the US Navy would be spending over $2 billion to improve their existing facilities on the island—spending that would spill over to the private sector in the form of jobs and infrastructure spending.

"This is a good time to invest in Guam," he said. "The timing is good."

More importantly, Camacho stressed that investments in the island were protected by US laws.

He urged Filipino businessmen and investors to buy and develop real estate on the island now while prices are still low.

Only one-third of the island is so far commercially developed, mainly in the form of residential and commercial establishments around Anderson Air Base, which took the place of Clark Air Base in Pampanga when the latter closed down in 1991.

Transco told to pay fines

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION has fined National Transmission Corp. (Transco) more than P9.4 million for implementing projects without its approval.

In an order dated March 1, the ERC said Transco violated Sec. 9d of RA 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), which noted Transco's responsibility to improve its transmission facilities, but only upon prior approval from the ERC.

The order covered two separate cases that the regulatory body filed against Transco.

One case involved 37 projects, and another involved the implementation of the Cebu-Negros and Negros-Panay interconnection projects without ERC approval.

The ERC, however, slapped penalties only only 33 of these projects, after determining that six of the 39 projects were being implemented by independent power producers and not Transco itself.

For 16 of the 33 projects, Transco only submitted some of the documents that the ERC required.

Of the 16, five had notices to proceed (NTP), while the remaining 11 did not.

Transco has to remit the P9.4 million to the ERC either in cash or postal money order within five days of receipt of the order.

The state firm also has to submit to the ERC applications for the approval of the projects cited in the case a maximum of 60 days from receipt of the order.

Fast-food chain cited as top taxpayer in Dumaguete

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—FAST-FOOD chain Jollibee Foods Corp. has been named the biggest corporate taxpayer here in 2005.

Records from the city treasurer's office showed that Jollibee paid some P1.2 million in business taxes to the city government last year.

Jollibee declared gross sales of P61 million in 2005, the city treasurer's office said.

Estelita Bais, officer in charge of the city treasurer's office, said that Jollibee has been paying the highest tax to the city for the past several years.

The food chain began operating a branch here in the second quarter of 1997 and opened its second store last October.

Lee Super Plaza, the biggest department store in Dumaguete, came in second, paying P839,460 in business tax.

Bais, however, explained that the tax rate for a restaurant or food establishment like Jollibee was higher compared to that for retail shops.

For restaurants, the rate is 3 percent of the first P50,000 and 2 percent of the excess.

The fourth biggest taxpayer was Bethel Guest House and Cang's Inc., followed by two other food outlets, Chowking and Greenwich, also of the Jollibee chain.

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₱100,000 - 499,999.00	8.250%
₱500,000 - 999,999.00	8.500%
₱1,000,000 - 4,999,999.00	8.750%
₱5,000,000 - up	9.000%

*Rates may change without prior notice

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PHILIPPINES, INC.
Suite 500, Puso ng Maynila Building
1046 A. Mabini Street cor. U.N. Avenue
Ermita, Manila

AFFIDAVIT OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that Fleet Management Services Philippines, Inc. Stock Certificate Nos. 1 and 7 for 7,497 and 1,250 shares respectively, in the name of Atty. A.B.F. Gaviola, Jr.; 8 for 1,250 shares in the name of Ms. Ma. Corazon D. Cruz and 9 for 1 share in the name of Ms. Jeannette T. Tumbali were reported lost, per their affidavits on file.

Anyone who may have claims against the above may notify the office.

If no claims are presented within 1 year from the last date of publication, replacement certificates therefor will be issued.

Manila, February 16, 2006.

(Sgd.) **MARIE JOSEPHINE C. SUAREZ**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI–March 9, 16 & 23, 2006)

PSALM
POWER SECTOR ASSETS & LIABILITIES MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PSALM, through its 2006 Corporate Operating Budget intends to apply the sum of Fourteen Million Three Hundred Thirty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Forty Pesos (P14,339,640.00) being the total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the above project. Bids received that exceed the ABC for each Schedule shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The PROCURING ENTITY now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Procurement of Various Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Resources for the Corporation:

Schedule	ITEM	QUANTITY	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
I	Desktop Computers	50 sets	P 6,059,200.00
	Notebook Computers	10 sets	
	Network Laser Printer	4 sets	
II	Digital Imaging/Document Scanner	3 sets	P 420,000.00
	Digital Imaging/Document Scanner (High Speed)	1 set	
III	Storage Area Network (SAN) solution components for business continuity requirement	1 lot	P 5,600,000.00
IV	LCD Projector with Document Reader	1 set	P 156,800.00
V	Upgrade and Renewal of Anti-Virus for 102 users and Additional 148 users license	1 lot	P 1,862,840.00
VI	Server Raid Controller for IBM xSeries Server	2 pcs.	P 240,800.00
	Local Area Network (LAN) Tester with Toner Tracer	1 set	
	TOTAL		P14,339,640.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to R.A. 5183. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the PROCURING ENTITY and inspect the Bidding Documents starting **March 10, 2006** at the address given below from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below from **March 10 to 16, 2006** and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00), either in cash or check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The PROCURING ENTITY will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties who have purchased a complete set of Bidding Documents on **March 17, 2006, 4:00 PM** at the PSALM Boardroom, 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 AM of March 30, 2006.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in an amount, in Philippine Peso, equivalent to one percent (1%), if in the form of cash, cashier's or certified check, or irrevocable letter of credit, or one and one-half percent (1 ½ %), if in the form of bank guarantee, computed on the basis of the total ABC for the Schedules for which bids will be submitted.

Only bids submitted in conformity with the Bid Form and Bid Price Schedule provided shall be accepted. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **March 30, 2006 10:00 AM** at PSALM Boardroom, 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the proceedings.

The PROCURING ENTITY reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation

Mr. Froilan A. Tampinco
2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel: (02)893-8202 Ext. 206; Fax: 840-3896
e-mail: *fatampinco@psalm.gov.ph*

(SGD.) **FROILAN A. TAMPINCO**
Acting Chairperson, PSALM Bids and Award Committee

(PDI–March 9 & 16, 2006)

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(As of March 15, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	25,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	35	35.5	35	35.5	1,138,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59.5	59.5	59	59	863,900
China Banking Corp.	685	685	675	675	3,300
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.39	0.4	6,200,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	67	69	67	69	451,900
International Exch. Bank	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	80,200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38	38	37	37	352,600
Philippine National Bank	31	31	31	31	12,500
Phil. Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	38	38	38	38	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	1,700
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
First Abacus Financial	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	180,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	3250	3250	3240	3240	1,100
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2180	2180	2180	2180	800
Ivantage Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	2,720,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43	43	42	42	24,600
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	40	40.5	39.5	40	582,200
Manila Electric Co. A	13	13.25	13	13	25,900
Manila Electric Co. B	19.5	20	19.5	19.75	703,900
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	1,312,000
Petron Corp.	4.45	4.6	4.45	4.55	3,347,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	150,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	32,000
CADP Group Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	22,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	18.5	18.5	18	18	46,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	35.5	36.5	35.5	36.5	583,000
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	50,000
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	167,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	40,000
San Miguel Corp. A	60.5	61	60.5	61	23,100
San Miguel Corp. B	79	79	77.5	78	743,900
Universal Robina Corp.	17.25	17.25	17	17.25	384,700
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.31	0.29	0.3	1,430,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.28	3,653,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	60,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.35	4.4	4.3	4.4	47,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	150,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	800,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.41	0.42	0.37	0.38	3,610,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	24,000,000
Ayala Corp.	345	345	340	342.5	214,430
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5	5.1	5	5.1	17,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	6,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.42	2.42	2.42	2.42	50,000
APC Group Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.87	250,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.6	8.6	7,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.94	1,750,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	415,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.26	2.36	2.24	2.34	2,344,000
Global Business Hldgs Inc.	43	54	43	54	4,800
JG Summit Holdings Inc.	5	5	4.9	4.95	1,131,000
Keppel Holdings B	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	3,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.29	0.34	0.29	0.3	150,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	2,550,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	150,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.125	0.135	0.125	0.135	1,530,000
SM Investments Corp.	224	227	223	224	1,194,670
South China Resources Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	200,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	600,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.125	0.12	0.125	3,130,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	5,722,600
Belle Corp.	0.96	1.02	0.95	1	6,620,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	1,390,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	587,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.54	1.66	1.54	1.66	41,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	3,380,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.47	0.51	0.47	0.51	45,750,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	50,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.22	2,937,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.85	3.05	2.85	2.95	736,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	1,520,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.44	1.48	1.44	1.46	6,929,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.31	0.33	4,270,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.28	4,790,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	34,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	13,060,000
SM Development Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	60,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.9	7.7	7.9	3,179,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	1,380,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	42,500
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	820,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	825	860	825	850	30,980
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.15	3.2	774,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1825	1840	1820	1825	52,590
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.22	0.205	0.22	25,290,000
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	32,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.05	0.048	0.05	5,500,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	72,000
Philweb Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.024	64,400,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	1,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	403,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	10,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.28	1.38	1.28	1.38	12,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	642,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.76	1.86	1.76	1.86	9,986,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	1,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	500,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	870,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	4,000
Far Eastern University	605	605	605	605	100
Ipeople Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	49,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.46	1.48	200,000
Paxys Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.5	708,000
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1	1.02	1	1	290,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.16	1.3	1.16	1.2	301,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	1,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	846,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	13,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	4,570,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.24	5,740,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	6,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	12,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.005	20,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.88	1.96	1.88	1.94	8,380,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.06	2.1	2.04	2.06	12,239,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	88,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.28	3,690,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	800,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	35,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	9,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.47	0.48	0.47	0.47	730,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	50,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.5	27,000
SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES					
Cashrounds Inc.	6	6	6	6	2,000

CURRENCIES

March 15, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.832016	1.000000	51.1930
Japan	Yen	0.007079	0.008508	0.4356
United Kingdom	Pound	1.453199	1.746600	89.4137
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107246	0.128899	6.5987
Switzerland	Franc	0.638685	0.767636	39.2976
Canada	Dollar	0.719612	0.864902	44.2769
Singapore	Dollar	0.512957	0.616523	31.5617
Australia	Dollar	0.612542	0.736214	37.6890
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.207818	2.653576	135.8445
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.221871	0.266667	13.6515
Brunei	Dollar	0.511380	0.614628	31.4647
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000091	0.000109	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.021257	0.025549	1.3079
UAE	Dirham	0.226553	0.272294	13.9395
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.201900	61.5289
Argentina	Peso	0.270574	0.325203	16.6481
Brazil	Real	0.392738	0.472032	24.1647
Denmark	Kroner	0.134002	0.161057	8.2450
India	Rupee	0.018752	0.022538	1.1538
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.224052	0.269288	13.7857
Mexico	New Peso	0.077999	0.093747	4.7992
New Zealand	Dollar	0.530656	0.637796	32.6507
South Africa	Rand	0.133481	0.160431	8.2129
Korea	Won	0.000852	0.001024	0.0524
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025694	0.030882	1.5809

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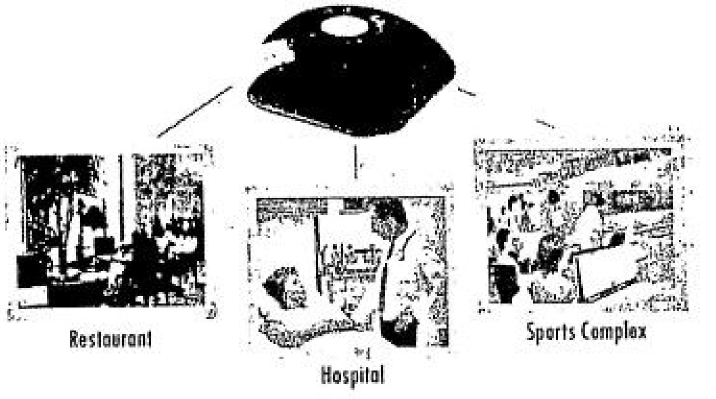

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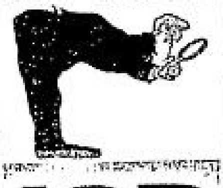

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May 06 - July 22, 2006
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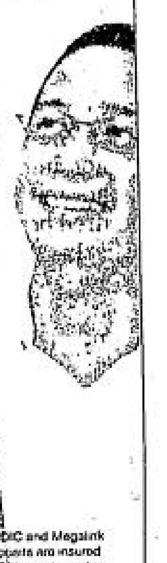
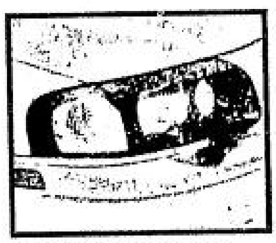
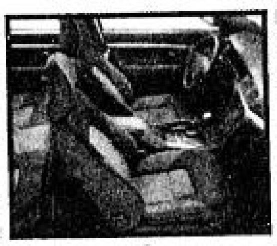
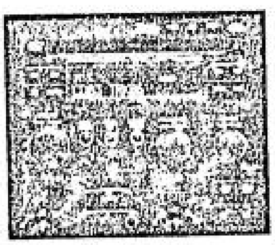
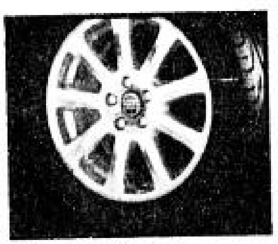


CATCH VOLVO CARS ON DISPLAY FROM MARCH 17-19, 2006 AT THE GATEWAY MALL ACTIVITY CENTER AREA & THE FORT STRIP ESPLANADE.


Bi-Xenon Headlamps


Luxurious & Spacious Interior


Dolby Pro-Logic Surround sound


17" Alloy Rims

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AMERICAN EXPRESS

Condole with the family of

VICENTE LOPEZ CHUA

Senior Adviser – Private Bank, Asia Pacific
Former Senior Country Executive
American Express Bank, Manila Offshore Branch

Who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 13, 2006.

***Vic** served American Express Bank for over 40 years. Admired and loved by both clients and colleagues alike, he will always be remembered as a man of the highest professional and ethical standards. He will be greatly missed by all of us who had the privilege of working with him.*

His remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Capilla dela Virgen. Interment with be on Saturday, March 18, 2006 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 10:00 a.m. mass.

We extend our condolences to his family and loved ones and join the pious readers in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

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CARD OF THANKS

The Family and relatives of the late

MARIA EVANGELISTA CUA

Who peacefully joined her Creator
on March 08, 2006

wish to express their gratitude and appreciation to all those who in one way or another condoled with them in their hour of bereavement.

WE DESIGN OBITUARY FOR FREE.

WENCESLAO K. MARTINEZ

of Alitagtag, Batangas
and Merville Park, Parañaque City
died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on March 12, 2006 at the age of 80.

His remains lie in state at Merville Parish Mortuary (Our Lady of Beautiful Love) in Parañaque City.

Interment will be on March 18, 2006 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the celebration of the Holy Mass at 9:00 a.m.

(Martinez Family - 0915-4488374; 8222661)

> *"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*
> John 14:6

So Lovingly Remembered
On the 4th Death Anniversary
of our Beloved

CESAR SEVILLA VIRAY

who passed away on the
eternal life
on March 16, 2002

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass shall be offered at the following churches:

The Parish of the Lord Divine Mercy *Sikatuna Village, Quezon City*	6:00 p.m.
Christ the King of the Universe Parish *Bagbag, Quezon City*	7:00 p.m.
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice *UP-Diliman, Quezon City*	6:00 p.m.
Santissimo Rosario Parish Church *UST, Manila*	5:15 p.m.
Sto. Domingo Church, *Quezon City*	6:00 p.m.
Lord of Resurrection Parish Church *SFDM, Quezon City*	6:00 a.m.

Tomas Viray & family request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

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More Classified Ads
on pages A24, B2, B5 & B6

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PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282 / 5288 / 5281

PNOC

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND REBID / BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

	Approved Budget
Various Sizes of CS SAW/ERW and Seamless Pipes under FGJ 50817	*PHP 5,145,000.00*
Two Hundred Eighty (280) Cubic Meters Liquid Caustic Soda under GT 517414	*PHP 4,650,000.00*
Steel Fence Materials under GO 516113	*PHP 2,900,000.00*

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance upon payment of a non-refundable fee at the above address based on the following schedules:

PR No.	Date of Issue	Cost per Document	Contact Person
FGJ 50817	March 15, 2006	PHP 400.00	Ms. Ma. Cristina Lynn M. Mercado loc. 5282
GT 517414	March 15, 2006	PHP 400.00	Mr. Anthony E. Cinaco loc. 5288
GO 516113	February 22, 2006	PHP 400.00	Mr. Edgar Allan T. Sadernas loc. 5281

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall also be held on **March 23, 2006** for FGJ 50817 and GT 517414, 2:00 p.m. at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time) of April 6, 2006 for FGJ 50817 and GT 517414 and March 24, 2006 for GO 516113.** Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI -March 16 & 23, 2006)

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'FOOD FOR SCHOOL' PROGRAM ADDRESSES CHILDREN'S HEALTH NEEDS

HAPPINESS IS ETCHED IN THE FACES OF THESE two elementary school children from Balbagon Elementary School in Camiguin after getting their rice allocation under the "Food for School", a joint program being implemented by the National Food Authority and the Department of Education. Under the program, identified pupil-beneficiaries are provided with a kilogram of rice each day they attend school for a period of three months. Aside from serving as incentive to attend their class, the program which is being implemented nationwide expects to mitigate hunger and prevent the decline of proper nutrition among school children. Studies show that short-term hunger syndrome and undernutrition among school children can stunt their mental and physical development and affect their academic performance.

Gov't urged to speed up sale of Napocor assets

A CONSUMER GROUP HAS URGED THE Energy Regulatory Commission to hasten the privatization of the generation assets of National Power Corp. (Napocor) by approving the proposed debt settlement agreement between the state-owned firm and power distribution giant Manila Electric Co.

The Northern Luzon-based Timpuyog Mannalon Amianan said the ERC nod for the compromise deal will remove a major stumbling block to the planned sale of Napocor assets to the private sector.

Consumer activist and Timpuyog spokesperson Melany Victoria said the deal should help improve the financial condition of Napocor, which is crucial to its privatization program.

Napocor and Meralco entered into a debt settlement compromise in 2004 which provides for a five-year payment of some P14 billion by the Lopez-owned firm. The amount represents the alleged disparity between the contracted level of power supply and the actual off-take by Meralco from Napocor from 2001 to 2003.

The deal also provides for increased power off-take from Meralco's independent power producers which would allow them to optimize dispatch levels.

P3.2-B bulk handling facility to open

RP seen as grains transshipment hub in Asia

THE COUNTRY HOPES TO BECOME a transshipment hub for grains in Asia with the opening of its biggest bulk handling facility in May or June, the terminal owner and government officials said on Tuesday.

Nation Granary Inc. is testing the P3.2-billion facility, which has a capacity of 225,000 tons, in Sariaya, Quezon.

"The objective of the project is to support the government's food security program and ultimately become the transshipment hub of grains in Asia," said an executive of Nation Granary, who asked not to be identified.

The same executive said the port had a depth of 18 meters which meant that, unlike facilities in other countries in the region, it could handle vessels with a capacity of 80,000 to 150,000 tons.

The facility, which occupies a 10-hectare site, has eight silos with a handling capacity of 15,000 tons each and six others with a capacity of 5,000 tons each. It also has a warehouse with a capacity of 75,000 tons.

The silos have computerized temperature controls.

"The Philippines needs a world-class grains terminal especially if the discharging rate is as fast as 16,000 tons per day," Ric Pinca, vice president of the Philippine Association of Feedmillers Inc., said.

The Nation Granary port aims for an average discharge rate of 16,000 tons per day, compared with the 10,000 tons unloaded each day at the grain terminal owned by Asian Terminals Inc. in Bataan.

A third terminal in Subic has a discharge rate of about 8,000 tons per day, Pinca said.

The country is one of the biggest importers of rice, its main food staple, and other grains and feedstuffs in Asia.

It bought 1.8 million tons of rice last year. It also imports nearly 3 million tons of both milling and feed wheat, 1.5 million tons of soymeal, 400,000 tons of soybeans and sometimes corn yearly.

Grain traders in Manila said Nation Granary had imported 33,000 tons of Chinese corn, 55,000 tons of Argentine wheat and 30,000 tons of Argentine soymeal to test the facility.

Officials at Philippine Export Import Credit Agency or PhilExim, a government firm which guaranteed the loans for the project, said the facility would help local farmers cut their post-harvest losses due to a lack of storage space.

"We lack storage and handling facilities now, so farmers are at the mercy of traders," Maria Clarissa Tuazon, senior vice president at PhilExim, said.

"The project would also create a multiplier effect for the economy," Tuazon said, adding the project had the support of the local community.

Of the P3.2-billion funding for the project, P1.4 billion was equity from Nation Granary and the rest were loans from Dutch bank ABN Amro NV and Philippine banks United Coconut Planters Bank and Philippine Bank of Communications. *Reuters*

Megaworld to raise P5B via shares offering

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY DEVELOPER MEGAWORLD Corp. is expected to raise P5 billion through the sale of new shares to international and local investors in late April, sources said.

Megaworld plans to offer 3.9 billion shares at 10 percent off its share price next month.

The total offer will be made up of 3.5 billion new shares and 400 million secondary shares. Megaworld closed at P1.46 a share yesterday.

In a prospectus filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), US-based real estate investor Colony-CB Richard Ellis, one of Megaworld's foreign shareholders, said it was considering selling its 6.7-percent stake or 723 million shares in the company.

The underwriter for the domestic offer is BDO Capital and Investment Corp., a wholly owned subsidiary of Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

Megaworld plans to use a portion of the proceeds for the development and construction of McKinley Hill Cyberpark and McKinley Hill Town Center in Fort Bonifacio and for Phase I and II of its Eastwood offices and Eastwood Mall in Libis, Quezon City.

Megaworld said its net tangible book value as of Dec. 31, 2005 was P1.58 a share. The book value after the offering was estimated at P1.54 a share.

Peso reaches 51.01:$1 in intra-day trade . . .

From page B1

Taking advantage of the surge in the BSP foreign exchange reserves, which had exceeded the $20-billion mark, Tetangco also announced the planned prepayment in April of a $395-million term loan, and $104.5 million in floating rate notes, maturing in October this year.

"The prepayment will enable the BSP to save on interest expense," Tetangco said.

As of end-February, the country's GIR hit a record high of $20.58 billion. *Doris C. Dumlao*

OFW remittances surge 16.5% to $917M

From page B1

month of January, new offshore jobs created for Filipinos dipped by 7.2 percent to 98,971 over the same month last year.

The number of land-based workers were reduced by 9.8 percent to 77,931, although sea-going workers grew by 3.9 percent to 21,040 from a year ago.

OFW remittances are now regarded as a significant economic indicator in the Philippines. The inflows are seen to lift households out of poverty by boosting funds for education, health and entrepreneurship. The foreign inflows have also helped strengthen the peso against the US dollar.

There are about eight million OFWs deployed abroad or about 10 percent of the population, of which three million are permanent residents.

Relative to the size of the country's economy, the amount of OFW inflows in the Philippines is now equivalent to about 10.5 percent of the gross domestic product, and about 20 percent of the country's export of goods and services.

Shares . . .

From page B1

2,127.91 after moving between 2,116.79 and 2,134.21. The broader all-shares index gained 7.03 points to 1,035.67.

Volume stood at 462.6 million shares worth P1.2 billion ($19.98 million). Gainers edged out losers 46 to 32, while 57 stocks were unchanged.

The peso traded at 51.06 to the dollar at noon Wednesday. *AFP*

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Ombudsman Building, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

OFFICE ORDER NO. 05-303
Series of 2005
TO : ALL CONCERNED
SUBJECT : CUSTOMIZED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN INVOLVED IN THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS
DATE : OCTOBER 20, 2005

I. PURPOSE

Procurement involves disbursement of public funds or funds placed under its official custody and the basic rule is that such funds should be properly spent by the Office. If the procurement is well managed by those involved in the procurement process, then, corruption and wastage of resources are avoided.

The Office of the Ombudsman is committed to the principle of good governance and it has exerted efforts to adhere to the principle of transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency, competitiveness and economy in the conduct of its procurement of Goods (all items, supplies, materials, equipment and general services) and Consulting Services and in contracting Infrastructure Projects. To ensure the integrity of the procurement process in the Office, it is essential to establish a customized Code of Conduct for all its officials and employees involved in the procurement process.

II. SCOPE

This customized Code of Conduct shall apply to all officials and employees of the Office who are involved in the procurement process, namely: the BAC, the TWG, the TIG, the BAC secretariat, the PMS / GSD, the FMS, the Accounting Division, the Planning and Budget Division, the Cashiering Unit, the Officials who are signatories to the Contracts / Agreements and the respective end-users.

III. POLICIES AND RULES

Section 1. Definition of Terms

As used herein, the term:

1.a Procurement – refers to the acquisition of Goods and Consulting Services, and the contracting for Infrastructure Projects by the Office of the Ombudsman.
1.b Goods – refer to all items, supplies, materials, equipment and general support services.
1.c Consulting Services – refer to services for Infrastructure Projects and other types of projects or activities of Government requiring adequate external technical and professional expertise including advisory and review services, pre-investment or feasibility studies, design, construction supervision, management and related services, and other technical services or special studies.
1.d Infrastructure Projects / Civil Works – include the construction, improvement, rehabilitation, demolition, repair restoration or maintenance of roads and bridges, railways, airports, seaports, communication facilities, civil works components of information technology projects, irrigation, flood control and drainage, water supply, sanitation, sewerage & solid waste management systems, shore protection, energy / power and electrification facilities, national buildings, school buildings, hospital buildings and other related construction projects of the government.
1.e Code – refers to the customized Code of Conduct for the Office of the Ombudsman BAC and the other Committees / Offices Involved in procurement.
1.f Office – refers to the Office of the Ombudsman.
1.g Gift – refers to a thing disposed of gratuitously in favor of another, and shall include a simulated sale or a disposition onerous to the giver.
1.h Benefit – refers to a right, privilege, entertainment, exemption or any other similar act of liberality in favor of another.
1.i BAC Secretariat – refers to the members of the support staff to the Bids and Awards Committee and the custodians of the procurement records.
1.j Suppliers / Contractors – refer to persons or group of persons, or entities that supply Goods and Consulting Services and contract for Infrastructure Projects.
1.k BAC – Bids and Awards Committee
1.l TWG – Technical Working Group
1.m TIG – Technical Inspection Group
1.n PMS – Property Management Section
1.o GSD – General Services Division
1.p IRR-A – Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A
1.q COA – Commission on Audit
1.r NGO – Non-Government Organization
1.s PS-DBM – Procurement Service Department of Budget and Management
1.t FMS – Finance and Management Services
1.u End-user – refers to the officers and employees of the unit for which the Goods, Consulting Services and Infrastructure Projects are intended.
1.v Signatories to the Contract – refer to the Officials who execute and sign the contract / agreement for the Office.

Section 2. General Provisions

The Chairman and Members of the Ombudsman BAC, TWG, TIG, the BAC Secretariat, and the officials and employees of the PMS / GSD, FMS, Planning and Budget Division, Accounting Division, Cashiering Unit, and the signatories to the contract, while in the performance of their duties and responsibilities as such, shall:

2.a Adhere strictly to the principles and provisions of laws and rules promoting transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency, professionalism, competitiveness and economy in procurement.
2.b Strictly avoid all situations that may give rise or tend to give rise to situations of conflict of interests or suspicions of conflict of interests. Should a conflict of interest arise, pursuant to Rule V of OMB Office Order Number 05-13 dated January 24, 2005, on the Norms of Behavior for Officials and Employees of the Office of the Ombudsman, it shall be the duty of the concerned official or employee to immediately disclose the same to his/her immediate supervisor and terminate the same, by way of a written declaration hereof. The written declaration on conflict of interest may be done periodically or for every contracting process.
2.c Absolutely refrain from soliciting and/or accepting, directly or indirectly, gifts and benefits for themselves or for others, from the suppliers, contractors and/or consultants regardless of whether or not said suppliers, contractors and/or consultants are transacting business with the Office of the Ombudsman.
2.d Absolutely refrain from accepting invitations or offers from suppliers, contractors and/or consultants or their representatives for meetings and conferences outside the Office.
2.e Strictly refrain from having personal contacts or interactions with suppliers, contractors and/or consultants. The latter are not allowed to enter the office premises, unless necessary to transact official business in which case their stay shall not be longer than what is required to finish their official transaction.
2.f Strictly adhere to the mandated time frames as provided for in Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
2.g Refrain from unduly influencing or exerting, undue pressure upon any member of the BAC or any officer or employee of the procuring entity or office to take a particular action which favors, or tends to favor a particular supplier, contractor and/or consultant.
2.h Strictly refrain from inviting as guests and getting as ninongs, ninangs, sponsors or donors the suppliers / contractors and/or consultants transacting business with the Office to avoid closeness and familiarity as well as the perception that undue benefit and/or advantage is being given to the member concerned of the BAC, TWG, TIG, PMS/GSD, BAC Secretariat, FMS, Planning and Budget Division, Accounting Division, Cashiering Unit, as well as signatories to the contract.
2.i Strictly observe the norms of behavior enunciated under Office Order Number 05-13 dated January 24, 2005, particularly on the provisions relating to Conflict of Interests and Confidentiality of proceedings.

Section 3. Specific Provisions

3.1 For the Bids and Awards Committee –

The BAC, in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.1.a Only have official contacts with suppliers, contractors and/or consultants whenever necessary during the pre-bid conference and opening of bids.
3.1.b Refrain from entertaining procurement transactions/queries from suppliers, contractors and/or consultants except through the BAC Secretariat.
3.1.c Attend the regular meetings of the BAC as scheduled.

3.2 For the BAC Secretariat –

The BAC Secretariat, in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.2.a Only have official contacts with suppliers, contractors and/or consultants whenever necessary during the bidding process.
3.2.b Prepare the necessary report/s and proper recording of all procurement transactions to ensure accountability and transparency.
3.2.c Be under the direct control, supervision and monitoring of the BAC.

3.3 For theTechnical Working Group –

The TWG, in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.3.a Only have official contacts with the concerned suppliers, contractors and/or consultants whenever necessary during the pre-bid conference, the opening of bids, the evaluation and post qualification process, and before submission of the Evaluation Report.
3.3.b Conduct ocular inspections of the suppliers, contractors and/or consultants' business offices, premises, warehouses, outlets, stores and factories unannounced. The date of ocular inspection and the team to conduct the ocular inspection shall be specified by and with authority from the BAC for monitoring purposes. In no case shall the TWG use other resources than that of the Office in the conduct of ocular inspection.
3.3.c Prepare a brief report for the BAC after every ocular inspection indicating the itinerary of travel and the expenses incurred. Claims for refund of expenses shall be properly documented and in compliance with the existing auditing and accounting rules and regulations
3.3.d Prepare the Technical Evaluation Report and submit the same to the BAC within the prescribed period pursuant to RA No. 9184 and its IRR-A.

3.4 For the Technical Inspection Group –

The TIG, in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.4.a Only have official contact with the suppliers or contractors whenever necessary during the delivery and acceptance of the delivered goods or the evaluation of the performance of the general support services rendered to the office.
3.4.b Conduct inspections of deliveries of goods and evaluation of general support services rendered to the Office by the suppliers or contractors:
- In the presence of the end-user, property custodian, and PMS Officer; and
- By rotation on a per delivery and per evaluation bases.

3.4.c Strictly comply with the Office specification/s in the conduct of inspection of goods and the evaluation of the general support services rendered to the Office by the suppliers or contractors.

3.5 For the Property Management Section / General Services Division –

The PMS/GSD, in the performance of their duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.5.a Only have official contact with the concerned suppliers, contractors and/or consultants whenever necessary prior to the preparation of the Purchase Orders (PO), the Job Orders (JO) or Contracts/Agreements, during the delivery of goods or general support services, and during the preparation of documents for payments. The PMS/GSD shall, in case of sealed canvass, contact the suppliers or contractors whenever necessary if there is a need to get information on certain goods or general support services and in the conduct of market probe.
3.5.b Prepare report/s and keep the records on procurement transactions pursuant to COA rules for submission to the Overall Deputy Ombudsman.

3.6 For the Finance and Management Services, the Planning and Budget Division, the Accounting Division and the Cashiering Unit –

The FMS, the Planning and Budget Division, the Accounting Division and the Cashiering Unit, in the performance of their duties and responsibilities as such, shall:

3.6.a Expeditiously process payments of claims arising from procurement provided that the Notice of Cash Allocation has been released and all supporting documents are submitted by the concerned suppliers and the PMS/GSD.
3.6.b Accurately record all procurement transactions in the respective general and subsidiary ledgers.
3.6.c Periodically coordinate with PMS/GSD to reconcile any discrepancy in the inventory of goods.
3.6.d Properly coordinate with the concerned office/bureau to obtain the documents or information needed for the processing of claims for payments arising from procurement.

3.7 For the Signatories to the Contracts/Agreements –

The Officials of the Office who are authorized signatories to the contracts or agreements shall act within the prescribed period as provided for under Republic Act No. 9184 and its IRR-A.

3.8 For the End-Users –

The end-user shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

3.8.a Maintain and update records of goods received, consumed and/or disposed.
3.8.b Submit to the Overall Deputy Ombudsman or the BAC a report involving any discrepancy, irregularity, or defect in the procurement of goods involving their respective unit/bureau/office using, among others, the End-User Feedback form.

Section 4. Accountability

All officials and employees involved in procurement shall strictly comply with the office requirements on authorized signatories and approving authorities. To strengthen accountability, a regular review of contracts as well as audits of procurement decisions shall be made by an independent Review Committee to be created for the purpose.

Section 5. Transparency

For transparency, officials and employees having custody of documents pertaining to procurement, which are not classified as confidential, shall make available for inspection the requested document upon written request by the interested party indicating the legal purpose, subject to prior approval of the Bids and Awards Committee. For this purpose, contract registers shall be maintained by the BAC which shall include among other things, data on the notice to bidders, product/service description, start and finish of contract, names and addresses of the participating bidders/parties involved, contract value, date of last audit conducted by the independent Review Committee and audit result, the names of all personnel involved in the procurement process.

IV. PENALTIES / SANCTIONS

Any violation of these Rules shall be a ground for disciplinary action, without prejudice to the filing of appropriate criminal charges against the erring official and/or employee.

V. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any provision of this Code is held unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and binding.

VI. EFFECTIVITY

This Office Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and upon the filing with the University of the Philippines Law Center of three (3) certified copies thereof, including its publication in a newspaper of general circulation for three (3) consecutive weeks.

MARGARITO P. GERVACIO, JR.
The Overall Deputy Ombudsman

(PDI – March 9, 16 & 23, 2006)

Generation rate hike OKd

Coverage limited to Napocor's Spug areas in Luzon

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY Commission has approved an increase in the subsidized/approved generation rates (SAGRs) charged by National Power Corp.'s Small Power Utilities Group (SPUG) in certain Luzon island groups.

In a 42-page order dated Dec. 16, 2005, the regulatory body approved an increase of P1.93 per kWh in the SAGR for Catanduanes, Marinduque, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Palawan, Romblon and Tablas, which were included in the 14 "first wave" Napocor's Spug areas.

Masbate was the only Luzon small island group within the 14 "first wave" Spug areas to be granted an SAGR increase of only P1.41 per kWh.

No rate hikes were granted to Visayas and Mindanao , the order stated.

The rate hike approval pushed the SAGR in the seven Luzon island groups to P5.64 per kWh. Masbate's SAGR was jacked up to P5.12 per kWh.

In the Visayas areas, the SAGR for Bantayan, Camotes and Siquijor remained at P6.26 per kWh, while the rate in Mindanao—Basilan, Tawi-tawi and Sulu—will still be P5.12 per kWh.

In the same order, the ERC placed the required missionary electrification subsidy for the "first wave" areas at P2.57 per kWh in 2005.

The approved subsidies were estimated at nearly 1.4 billion in the first 14 Spug areas alone.

The missionary electrification subsidy requirement was biggest in Palawan at P297 million using a 2005 generation forecast of 126,091 megawatt-hours (MWh).

The 14 "first wave" areas represented the initial areas that were declared open for private sector participation.

The remaining Spug areas would eventually be opened to private sector participation later.

Napocor-Spug is set to file a separate application for the universal charge-missionary electrification requirement of the Spug areas not included in the "first wave," the ERC order said.

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THE BORACAY sunset

Tourism campaign focuses on Boracay

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A PRIVATE SECTOR -LED CAMpaign aimed at bringing in five million foreign visitors a year is focusing on making Boracay more tourist-friendly through inducing investments of up to P10 billion.

Samie Lim, chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's tourism committee, said the World Bank's International Finance Corp. had prepared a list of business opportunities costing between P10 million and P10 billion for this resort island.

Lim said the PCCI was coordinating projects to put up transport services and additional rooms in Boracay through its Biztour 5 campaign.

He said there were plans to set up a Hong Kong-style ferry service between Caticlan and Boracay, while Tiger Airways and other budget airlines were interested in expanding services to secondary airports like the one in Caticlan.

Lim said big hotel operators like the Shangri-La group were in various stages of putting up accommodation facilities with 300 to 500 rooms each in Boracay.

Lim said the focus on Boracay was aimed at making the island the country's biggest tourist magnet, with arrivals hoped to be increased to about 3 million a year from the current 140,000.

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The Players
We have two Canadians and two Canadian Permanent Residents on staff full-time. Not only do we know the rules and regulations, but we really know Canada... it is our home. Leading the briefing this week is our President and Senior Consultant, Dale Thompson. Likely the friendliest and most knowledgeable immigration consultant you'll ever meet.

The Bonus
Fresh brewed coffee Canadian style and donuts (Donuts were originally invented by a Canadian).

Date, Times and Venue
This coming Saturday, March 18th; Morning Session begins at 10:30 a.m., Afternoon Session begins at 1:30 p.m. Both will take place at Suite 1206 12th Floor MCS Tower, Makati Cinema Square, Don Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City.

Interested parties must be pre-qualified. Call 811-1217, 811-1619 or 889-0615, then dial 115 for Lew Rogers, 108 for Ms. Thummy, or 109 for Ms. Kaye
Or text your name and contact info to (0918) 572-3070

Special Announcement

We are elated to announce that our senior consultant, Mr. Dale Thompson, has recently completed and passed the full membership exam as required by the Canadian Society of Immigration Consultants. He is currently the only licensed Immigration Consultant living in the Philippines authorized by the Federal Government of Canada.

Being represented by a Licensed Immigration Consultant ensures confidentiality, and the assurance that your application is completed to the highest standards in compliance with all the rules and regulations of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT
Northern Mindanao
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (088) 858-7123; 233-23-06, 350-4325; 726476

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Center for Health Development – Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, is inviting contractors and security services operators to apply for eligibility and to bid for security services for calendar year 2006 with Approved Budget Cost of P876,000.00 sourced out of the GOP appropriations for this Office.

Timetable of bidding process are as follows:

Bidding Process	Schedule
Registration of interested contractors	Starts March 9, 2006
Pre-Bidding Conference	March 20, 2006 2:00 PM, DOH-CHD Conference Room
Period of contractors eligibility check	March 10-24, 2006
Opening of Bids	March 27, 2006 2:00 PM, DOH-CHD Conference Room

Bid forms will be made available to suppliers/contractors who passed the eligibility check at a non-refundable cost of P500.00.

The Director IV of the DOH-CHD Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, reserves the right to waive any defect or informality in the offers of bids, and rejects any or all bid proposals that may be deemed disadvantageous to the government.

For further information, please inquire from the Bids and Awards Committee, or its Secretariat, or call telephone no. 858-7123, 233-2306; 350-4325; or visit our website at www.chd10.doh.gov.ph or email us at chd_cdo@yahoo.com.

(Sgd.) JULITO C. SABORNIDO, JR., MD, MPH
Director IV

(PDI–March 9 & 16, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City
Tel. No. (062) 992-7763

Solicitation No. Goods 06-0303-024

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Drugs and Medicines
(Name of Project)
Amoxicillin 500 mgs., Clotrimazole Vaginal Tabs, etc.
(Brief Description of GOODS)

1. **The City Government of Zamboanga**, through the **General Fund 2006** intend to apply the sum of **THREE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED SIXTY PESOS (P3,540,760.00) ONLY** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for **Drugs and Medicines (PR No. 100-06-02-0222)** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. **The City Government of Zamboanga** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for **Amoxicillin 500 mgs., Clotrimazole vaginal tabs, etc.** Delivery of the GOODS is required for **Ten (10) working days**. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the law or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **City Government of Zamboanga-Procurement, Acquisition & Award Division** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **8:00 am to 5:00 pm from March 06 to 22, 2006**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **P1,200.00**. The method of payment will be **Cash payable to the City Treasurers Office**. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The City Government of Zamboanga will hold a ***Pre-Bid Conference*** open to all interested parties on **March 08, 2006; 10:00 AM at the City Engineers Conference Room.**
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 AM, March 22, 2006**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of **Check, Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Manager's Check** payable to the City Treasurer. Bank Draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit and in the amount of **P35,407.60 or Bank Guarantee** in the amount of **P53,111.40 or Surety Bond** in the amount of **P88,519.00** or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **March 22, 2006 at 10:00 AM in the City Engineers Conference Room, City Hall, Z.C.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders representatives who choose to attend at the address below
9. **To be delivered in the Office of the City General Services Intended for the Office of the City Health.**
10. The City Government of Zamboanga reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procurement, Acquisition & Awards Division
Milagros W.S. Saavedra
City Hall, N.S. Valderosa St., Z.C.
Tel. Fax 992-7763 or 991-0862

(Sgd.) MARIO D. ARRIOLA (DVM)
BAC Chairman

(PDI March 9 & 16 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
CEBU PORT AUTHORITY
CIP Complex Serging Osmeña Boulevard, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City
E-mail cpa@cpa.gov.ph
Telephone 232-1461 to 63 231-6856 to 57
Fax No. 231-6848

AN INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(AMENDED)

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA), North Reclamation Area, Cebu City through its Bids and Award Committee (BAC), invites all interested consultants to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **Engagement of Financial Advisor (FA) for the Corporatization and Privatization Plan of the Cebu Port Authority**

The Approved Budget for the Contract ("ABC") is THREE MILLION (P3M), to be paid by the CPA, plus 0.75% of the total sales proceeds from the successful privatization

PHASE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	FEES
I. Valuation	Preparation of Valuation and appraisal report, information memorandum and privatization plan	Not to exceed Three Million Pesos (P3M)
II. Implementation	Implementation of the privatization plan, as approved by the Privatization Council	Not to exceed 0.75% of the sales proceeds (SUCCESS FEE)

Interested FAs must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) through the BAC Secretariat on or before **March 23, 2006**. The eligibility requirements may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat starting **March 23, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00)

Eligibility and Short Listing Requirements/Documents shall be submitted in a sealed envelope to the BAC Secretariat not later than 2:00 P.M. of March 31, 2006. Sealed envelopes submitted shall be immediately opened after the deadline. The eligibility of registered bidders shall be evaluated using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria based on the indicated eligibility requirements

The BAC shall draw up the short list of Financial Advisors (FAs) from those who have submitted LOIs and have determined as eligible both in accordance with the provision of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A ("IRR-A"). The short list of prospective bidders shall not exceed five (5) FAs. The criteria and rating system for short listing are

- a. 30% – General experience of the FA, considering both the overall experience of the firm and the individual experience of the principal and key staff, including relevant experience of the principal and the key staff from previous employment;
- b. 30% – Privatization experience of the FA;
- c. 20% – Qualification of personnel who may be assigned to the project;
- d. 20% – Dealings of the FA with the Philippine government

The passing rate to be eligible is 70%. Based on such evaluation, the BAC Secretariat will issue the list of short-listed consultants on April 07, 2006.

In accordance with the IRR-A of RA 9184, bidding for the hiring of an FA will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures. Only bids from short listed FA's will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents to be obtained from the CPA. The contract will only be awarded to the highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post qualification

The CPA-BAC shall evaluate bids using **Quality-Cost Based Evaluation** procedure. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders to be obtained from the CPA.

The bid documents shall be made available to all eligible and short listed FAs by the BAC Secretariat starting April 18, 2006

The Pre-bid Conference for all eligible and short listed FAs shall be held at 3:00 P.M. on **April 25, 2006** at the Conference Room, Cebu Port Authority

All bids should be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 3:00 P.M. on **May 10, 2006** at the Conference Room, Cebu Port Authority. All bids submitted shall be opened in public view immediately after the lapse of the deadline.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)

CPA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality/defect therein, and to accept such bid as may be deemed most advantageous to the government.

For inquiries, please contact the BAC Secretariat at (63) (32) 412-9027 or (63) (32) 231-6856.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
CEBU PORT AUTHORITY
CIP Complex, Serging Osmeña Boulevard
North Reclamation Area, 6000 Cebu City

(Sgd.) **MARIO G. TAN**
BAC Chairman

Noted by
(Sgd.) **MARIANO C.J. MARTINEZ**
General Manager

*AMENDING INVITATION TO BID PUBLISHED LAST MARCH 02, 2006

(PDI March 9 & 16, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development
Field Office VI, M.H. del Pilar St., Molo, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 336-54-25 Fax No. (033) 336-54-28
Email: fo6@dswd.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Department of Social Welfare and Development through GOP-PDAF-2006-06-10 intends to apply the sum of **Eight Million Pesos (8,000,000.00)** being the **Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)** to payments under the contract for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS FOR PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN THE 4th DISTRICT OF ILOILO**. Bids in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.
2. The Department of Social Welfare and Development, through its Bids and Awards Committee now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply and Delivery of Various School Supplies and Materials for Public Elementary and High School pupils. Delivery of the GOODS is required by **May 15-26, 2006** during office hours at DSWD Field Office VI, M.H. del Pilar St., Molo, Iloilo City. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine the responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office VI and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

   BAC Secretariat, Supply Unit
   DSWD Field Office VI, M.H. del Pilar St., Molo, Iloilo City
   Tel. No. (033) 3365425, (033) 3365426
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos Only (Php2,500.00)**. The method of payment will be in the form of **Cash**. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his duly authorized representative.
6. The Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office VI will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **March 23, 2005, 10:00 a.m.** at the DSWD Conference/Training Center, M.H. del Pilar St., Molo, Iloilo City
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **April 4, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of
   - a. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of Php 8,000,000.00 or Php 80,000.00)
   - b. Bank Guarantee (1.5% of Php 8,000,000.00 or Php 120,000.00)
   - c. Surety Bond (2.5% of Php 8,000,000.00 or Php 200,000.00)

   or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. **Late Bids shall not be accepted**
8. Bid opening shall be on April 4, 2006 at 2:00 pm at the DSWD Conference/Training Center, M.H. del Pilar St., Molo, Iloilo City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

DSWD Conference/Training Center
M.H. del Pilar St., Molo, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 3365425, (033) 3365426

(Sgd.) JOEL P. GALICIA
OIC – Assistant Regional Director &
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-March 16 & 23, 2006)

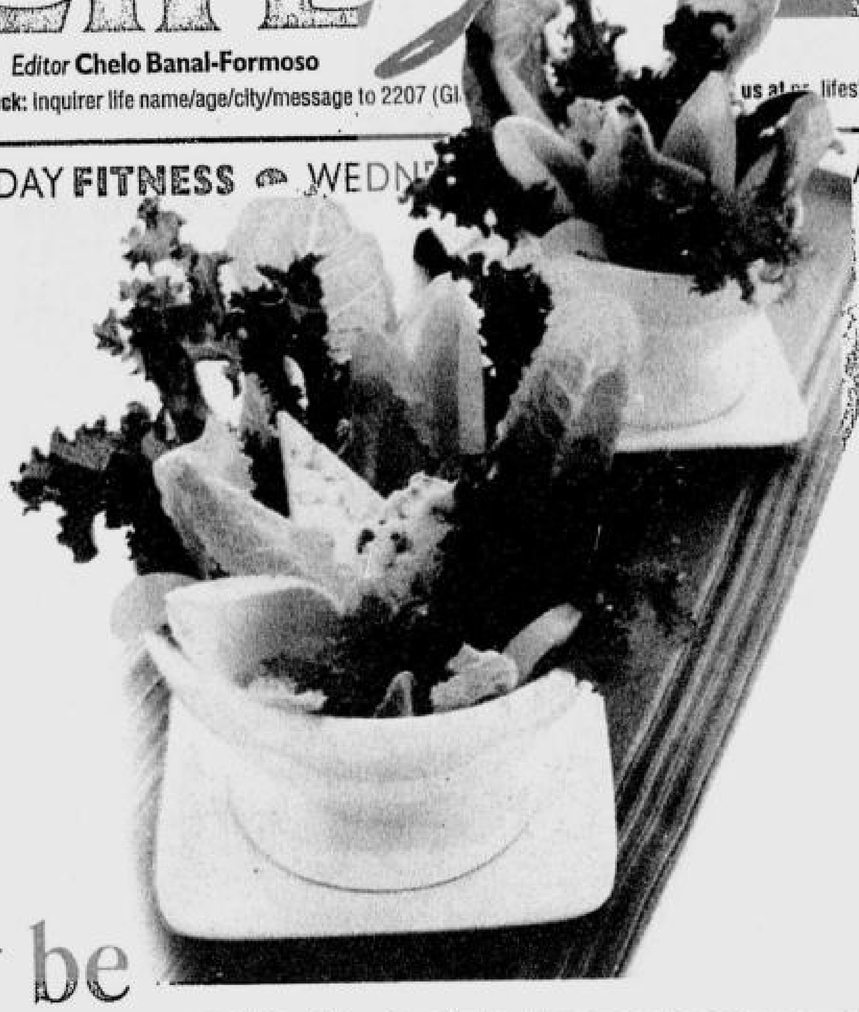
A CULINARY star celebrates a birthday /C4

LIFESTYLE
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Gl … us at … lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

THE MANY ways to make 'kinilaw' /C3

MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** ◆ TUESDAY **FITNESS** ◆ WEDN… …AY **FOOD** ◆ FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

A STYLIST'S tools of the trade may include food coloring, Kitchen Bouquet, soy sauce and other seasonings. ROGER CARPIO



STYLIZED salad can double as a table centerpiece.

The ice cream that makes your mouth water may be just an 'illusion' created from sugar, syrup and shortening

If it looks good, it may be the styling

By Vangie Baga-Reyes

BEHIND ALMOST EVERY picture-perfect plate of food in a magazine or a cookbook is a food stylist.

Food has to look "alive" in photographs, according to renowned American food stylist Delores Custer, who has been responsible for making everything—from ice cream to seafood—look good for the cameras these past 30 years. Her food-styling jobs are not limited to food features in magazines but also include television commercials and print advertisements.

She also conducts styling workshops at the Culinary Institute of America. Besides the United States and Canada, she has given workshops in Japan, Chile, Argentina and Norway.

Custer was recently in Manila for a day-long food-styling workshop, upon the invitation of Food Magazine editor in chief Norma Chikiamco and contributing editor Corito Llamas, who were both her students at CIA.

Custer was assisted by Mary Grapsas, also a US-based food stylist.

The Manila seminar, which was held at the ELJ Communication Center, was attended by hotel chefs, culinary instructors, art directors, photographers, restaurateurs, caterers, food manufacturers and food enthusiasts who came from as far south as General Santos and as far north as Baguio City.

The graceful 60-something Custer discussed the latest trends in food-styling, how to deal with difficult food, use of color and texture for maximum effect, and shooting for film and camera.

She said the first thing a food stylist had to do was to know the assignment, whether it was for editorial, public relations, advertising, packaging or television purposes. "For any of these assignments, a food stylist should produce pictures that look as good as the lip-smacking photographs you see in magazines or cookbooks," she said.

Custer always brings her styling kit along on all her travels. A food stylist, she said, must have his/her basic equipment for

IF IT LOOKS/ C2

DELORES Custer is a prominent food stylist and teacher in New York City. ROGER CARPIO

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IN FOOD STYLING, one must know balance in composition, either formal (symmetrical) or informal (asymmetrical).

CHICKEN Manila

If it looks good, it may be the styling

From page C1

styling. The kit should include measuring items (spoons, cups and digital timer); knives and shears (slicer, parer, corer and zester); cleaning and touch-up aids (Q-Tips, handi-wipes); food items (Kitchen Bouquet, corn syrup, gelatin and cornstarch); brushes and spatulas, and things like tweezers, syringes, needle and thread, and thin wire.

Tricks of the trade

Custer revealed tricks food stylists use to highlight a product's features and minimize its flaws. For instance, ice cream, one of the most difficult foods to photograph, is often made from powdered sugar, butter-flavored Crisco shortening and Karo syrup.

She used Kitchen Bouquet to simulate "coffee without scum" or, diluted in water, iced tea and chardonnay wine.

She worked with Elmer's glue for that whiter, thicker milk. A hot skewer was used to add grill marks to grilled vegetables. For pasta, like pesto, she substituted parsley for basil "for that greener, richer look."

"You see, there are right tools for the right stuff," Custer pointed out.

A food stylist could use a steam machine to make food look piping hot and substitute non-melting plastic ice cubes in cold drinks.

Soap bubbles are added to a glass of milk for that freshly poured look. Meat is slathered with Vaseline or mineral oil for sheen. A tablet of Alka Seltzer could keep carbonated beverages fizzy for the camera.

Bottom line

Lest you think a food stylist's job is simply to fake it, Custer stressed that a food stylist must be a very good cook.

"I still believe it is important for food stylists to have good baking skills, as well as cooking skills," she said.

Participant Jean Pierre Migne, executive chef of Manila Diamond Hotel, agreed. "You can always learn styling, but the bottom line is cooking," he said. "Most food stylists were cooks before. Custer was right when she said you should at least know how a particular ingredient would react in the oven."

Sandy Masigan of Dimsum N' Dumplings said she would now keep a food-styling kit for pictorials of their products.

Glenda Barretto of the Via Mare chain of restaurants realized that using mashed potatoes as a substitute for ice cream was now "obsolete."

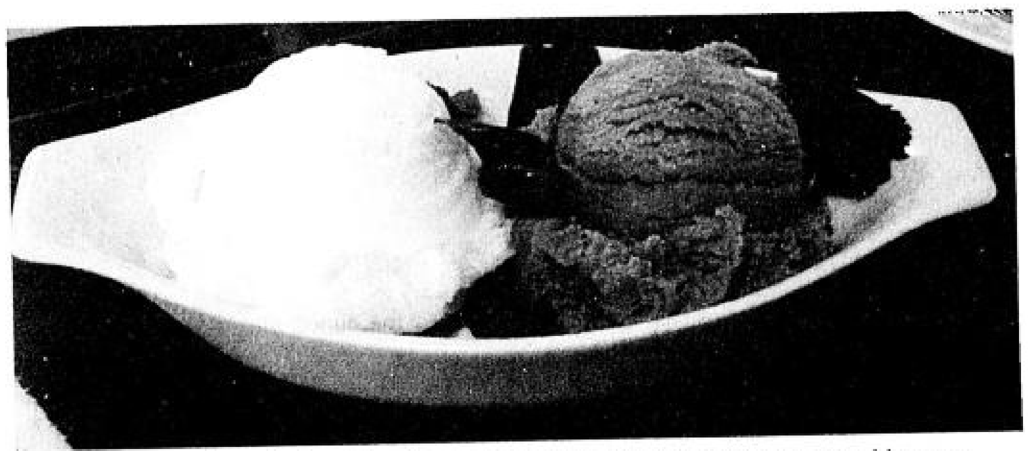
"Now I can use Crisco and powdered sugar," she said. "[And] to make my sauces look shiny in pictures I only need to add Karo syrup. That I really didn't know."

Each participant got a handout of different types of food-styling (for editorial, advertising, packaging, television and film) and basic equipment. During lunch at Restaurant 9501, ABS-CBN's exclusive penthouse resto, Custer's special dishes like Chicken Manila, meat and potato casserole and coconut calamansi bars were served.

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph.

A FOOD stylist must know the camera angle and how the light hits the food.

CUSTER says preparing food for the camera requires skills different from preparing food for the table.



LOCALS who used mashed potatoes for ice cream photos before learned something new from Custer.

ROGER CARPIO

New credit card scam by phone?

THE CONSUMER

Linda B. Bolido

AN E-MAIL FROM ABROAD warns of a new credit card scam.

Some people have reportedly received calls purportedly from the issuer of their credit card. The caller identifies himself as somebody with the security and fraud department of the company and even gives a badge number. He proceeds to tell the client that his/her card has been flagged for an "unusual purchase pattern" so he is calling to verify.

The caller already knows basic details like the card number, the issuing bank and the client's address. He mentions an establishment where purchase was supposedly made. When the client denies making the purchase, the caller says the credit card company will credit the amount of the spurious purchase to the client's account.

The caller then tells the credit card holder, "I will be starting a fraud investigation.

"If you have any questions, you should call the 1-800 number listed on the back of your card and ask for Security." He gives a six-digit control number supposedly to facilitate inquiries.

The clincher—and how the scam works: the caller allegedly says, "I need to verify you are in possession of your card." He asks you to "turn your card over and look for some numbers." There are seven numbers—the first four are part of your card number, the next three are security numbers that verify you are the possessor of the card. The caller will ask for those three numbers.

He will tell you later, "That is correct. I just needed to verify that the card has not been lost or stolen, and that you still have your card."

According to the e-mail, the original source of the warning phoned the card company 20 minutes after receiving the call to ask a question. The company's real "security department told us it was a scam and in the last 15 minutes a new purchase... was charged to our card."

What the scammers want, the warning says, is the three-digit PIN (personal identification number) at the back of the card. Credit card issuers say they will never ask for anything on the card as they already have the information since they issued the card.

Though the local Citibank office has not heard of such a scam, it repeats its advice to clients never to disclose personal information and/or their PIN to anyone. "In the interest of protecting our clients from similar scams, Citibank regularly sends out mailers offering security tips and we also make relevant information easily available on our website at www.citibank.com.ph," the company says.

Tips

It offers the following security tips:

- Keep your PIN confidential. Do not write it down and paste onto your ATM card. Your PIN should be memorized and not recorded anywhere. Try not to use consecutive numbers, or numbers linked to your personal information like birth date, home address, phone number.
- Never disclose your PIN via regular e-mail, which is not encrypted.
- Never lend your card to anyone or accept advice from strangers while you are using it.
- Do not open e-mail from unfamiliar persons/sources. Scan any attachments you receive via e-mail and immediately delete suspicious messages with attachments.
- Watch out for scam e-mail. It may appear to come from a trusted business colleague/associate or friend, but is actually designed to trick you into downloading a virus or visiting a fraudulent website and disclosing sensitive information.
- Be aware of phony "look-alike" websites designed to trick people into disclosing personal information. If you are suspicious of a website, leave it. Do not follow any of the instructions given.
- As a rule, banks will not send e-mail to customers to verify confidential, personal or account information. Delete e-mail of this nature, even if it appears to have come from your bank.
- If you bank online, make sure no one is watching you while you key in your PIN or any other sensitive information. Citibank introduced recently the Dynamic PIN Pad, a special security feature to prevent people from capturing keystrokes when the PIN is entered.
- Check your accounts regularly and contact your bank immediately if you note any discrepancies/irregularities.

Resolved

Thanks to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for helping resolve the complaint of Doris Irog (Jan. 12) regarding charges to her cashless-shopping card though she was unable to use it. The Equitable Card Network Inc. informed the BSP's Supervision and Examination Department that it "already effected credit to the c lient's account on 10 January 2006," after it received the report on the unsuccessful transaction.

(Our regular columnist, Marietta V. Giron, is indisposed. Please send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; PO Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com. ph —Editor)

Thai food festival

DINING OUT

DUSIT HOTEL'S Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant presents the Chaopraya promo until March 31. A la carte menu includes Chaopraya Ruam Mit (deep-fried fish, prawn, vegetables served with chili sauce), Tale Tid Oon (glass noodle with prawn and yellow curry), Pla Vay Nam (deep-fried *lapu-lapu* topped with herbs and spices), Vihok Kuen Rang (stir-fried seafood with special sauce served in crispy cup) and Yam Samun Pri (crispy, fried Thai herb with fish salad). Call 8673333.

INTERCONTINENTAL'S Café Jeepney presents Davao Food Fiesta buffet until March 31, for lunch (Monday-Sunday) and dinner (Monday-Saturday). Menu includes Tuyum Likaw (fresh sea urchin roe salad), Tuna Chicharon (tuna crackling), Sugba Panga sa Barilis (grilled tuna jaw), Baka-Tuloasog (beef casserole in chocolate *tabliya* sauce), Pinais nga Pandawan awon Kaupas (steam-grilled *maki-maki* and fresh mushroom), Pinauga nga Adobong Baboy Liempo (crisp-fried garlic-stewed pork belly), Balbacua with Tanglad Sauce (crispy fried ox tail with lemon grass sauce), Puto Taktak (steamed cassava with dry molasses) and Balanghoy Budbud with Durian Sauce (cassava dumplings with *durian* cream). Call 8159711.

MANILA PAVILION Hotel's Boulvar features Sushi and Sashimi Platter promo until March 31, at P495 ++ per order. Call 5261212 local 2317.

SHANGHAI BISTRO offers a graduation special package. Customers can choose from two sets of menu prepared by Shanghai Bistro's Chinese chefs. A set menu of Barbecued Meat combination, Seafood Roll, Seafood Beancurd Soup, Steamed Fish Fillet Shanghai-Style, Pan-fried Beef Cake with Black Pepper Sauce, Steamed Black Mushroom Stuffed with Minced Shrimp, Braised E-fu Noodles with Assorted Meat, Yang Chow Fried Rice, Duet Sweet Dim Sum, Almond Jelly and one round of iced tea, for P415 net per person. A set menu worth P435 net per person features Suckling Pig combination, Hot Chicken Salad, Minced Beef Soup with Chinese Parsley, Fried Fish Fillet with Golden Mint Sauce, Stir-fried Beef with Bamboo Shoot and Baby Corn, Pork Spareribs King Tao Sauce, Braised E-fu Noodles with Assorted Meat, Fookien Fried Rice, Duet Sweet Dim Sum, Almond Jelly and one round of iced tea. The graduation special package promo is valid at Shanghai Bistro's Eastwood City Walk 2 and Paseo Center-Makati branches until April 30. Call 6877103, 6871077, 8928870 and 8928872.

BURGOO gives 15-percent discount in all its branches to all graduates until April 30. Just present your diploma or graduation certificate before ordering. Burgoo's all-time favorites include Oklahoma-style Grilled Baby Back Ribs, Seafood Linguini, Supreme Pizza, Hamburgoo, Buffalo Chicken Wings, Sta. Fe Spring Rolls among others. Call 9277424, 8981815, 6875254, 7264663 and 9136112.

CHINESE MONK at G/L, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati, offers 15-percent discount to graduates. Just present your diploma or graduation certificate before ordering. Promo runs until April 30. Call 8974129.

BELLEVUE HOTEL pays tribute to graduates with its 5 + 1 promo. For every group of six taking the buffet at Café D'Asie, one dines for free. Call 7718181.

CONGO GRILLE pays tribute to graduates. For a minimum order of P750, a customer is entitled to a free dish. He can choose any of the restaurant's best-selling dishes like the sizzling *sisig*, chicken, tuna or shrimp. Promo runs until April 30. Graduates should present a valid school ID to avail of the promo. The restaurant's all-time favorites include Sizzling Sisig, Pakbet, Kare-Kare, Tuna Belly, Grilled Pusit and Crispy Pata. The new dishes include Beef Mexicana, Adobo Flakes, Kuhol sa Gata and Baked New Zealand mussels. The graduation promo is available in Congo Grille on Arnaiz Street, Makati; El Pueblo, Ortigas Center; Westgate Center; Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa; SM City Fairview, Quezon City; SM City San Lazaro, Manila; SM City Valenzuela; and SM Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

MEATLESS LENT
Dimsum N' Dumplings' Taro Puff is made with fresh taro and stuffed with shrimp, squid and crab in a crisp, flaky coating. Taro Puff is available at Dimsum N' Dumplings Tea Bar, 2/F, VMall, Greenhills Commercial Center.

‘Kinilaw’ isn’t always just raw fish and vinegar

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

AN AUSTRALIAN TOURIST WATCHED as I piled on my plate *ararosep/lato*, those grape-like seaweed eaten all over the country.

He asked if it was good. When I told him yes, he got some. He told me later the seaweed was great and asked what I ate with it. I said any seafood and mentioned *kinilaw* but gave a name more familiar to him, *ceviche*. He said he had eaten it earlier and loved it.

Both the seaweed and the *kinilaw* on the buffet table of Club Paradise made me smile. This beautiful island resort in Palawan is one of those enlightened places that include Filipino food on the menu though most of the guests are foreigners. The *tanguigue* (Spanish mackerel) *kinilaw* was cut into cubes, each piece pristine white and still firm. All the tastes mingled—sour, salty and hot.

On our first day in Palawan, before reaching Club Paradise, we stopped by its sister resort, El Rio y Mar. The chef did a *tanguigue kinilaw* but the pieces were more curly, not cubed. The cut was different. When vinegar was squeezed out of the thin slices, the pieces looked crumpled.

First lesson

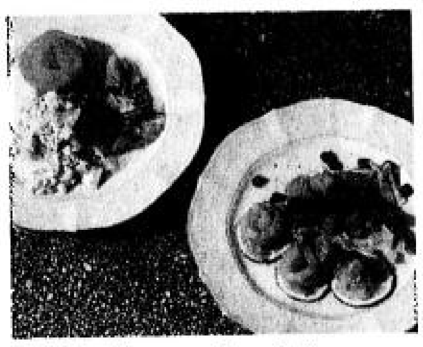
The marinating and squeezing of the vinegar were the first things I learned of this style of “non-cooking.” This is the way of washing the seafood then removing the liquid used for washing it to remove the fishiness.

So many of the *kinilaw* served today let the pieces stay in the marinade that the mixture ends up too sour and overdone.

I shared the lesson with my fellow travelers who joined a *kinilaw*-making contest that Club Paradise organized.

Everyone thought knowing how to cook went with my job (it did not), so I was designated as judge. I later became coach to all three teams. I tasted their output and suggested what more to add. One entry had to be redone. I managed to impart lessons learned from *kinilaw* masters.

The masters I met were all from the Visayas where *kinilaw* was an art. The first teachers were my husband’s relatives from Leyte who came to the house to teach a new wife what made a good *kinilaw*.



EL RIO y Mar *tanguigue kinilaw* beside the Japanese tuna and salmon sashimi

The most senior was an uncle known for his cooking and whose assistant was his son, who would later exhibit that culinary talent, too. Different fishes were used to illustrate the different styles, supported by flavors from salt, pepper, ginger, *calamansi*, vinegar, coconut. In the end, we had about six kinds of *kinilaw*, more than enough for an all-night drinking session.

Smoky finish

What I do remember among all those styles is the one sprinkled on top with toasted grated coconut for a smoky finish.

One of the more unusual versions was taught by a cousin, with deboned *bangus* as the main ingredient. He did the *kinilaw* in the usual way but added mayonnaise in the end. It was very good.

A restaurant opening was an occasion to meet another *kinilaw* master featured in the book “Kinilaw, A Philippine Cuisine of Freshness (Bookmark, 1991)” by Doreen G. Fernandez and Edilberto Alegre.

Vicente Lobaton or Mang Enteng presented various *kinilaw* methods depending on the main ingredient.

Using Ilonggo names for the ingredients, he enumerated the different treatments. For most white fish like the *tanguigue* or *bulao* (*alumahan*, mackerel), *calamansi* was added first as this didn’t “cook” the fish too soon but merely coated the cubed pieces and sealed the flavor of the ingredient. Vinegar was added to the grated coconut before the milk was squeezed out.

For crustaceans such as *kasag* (*alimasag*), *pasayan* (shrimp) and *lucon* (prawn) and most especially the *lukos* (squid), it’s best, he said, to dip them in vinegar because marinating would make these overdone.

Finishing

Mang Enteng enumerated other ways to finish the *kinilaw*. Fruits like green *siniguelas* added tartness and a bitter edge to the mixture. Green mangoes could add sourness. Salted eggs or *tausi* gave another dimension to the usual salt.

Mang Enteng said to look him up at any of his restaurants if I happened to be in Bacolod. Unfortunately, I had no time to go to Enteng’s Special of Sagay that also had two branches in Bacolod. I missed my chance to go with him out to sea, watching him do the *kinilaw* on site and eating it right there. I dream of that time.

Since I live with a Leyteño who does the *kinilaw* at home, I taught the contestants his style. Foremost lesson was the vinegar bath for the *tanguigue*, *lapu-lapu* and prawns. The prawns had to be redone because the vinegar bath was too short.

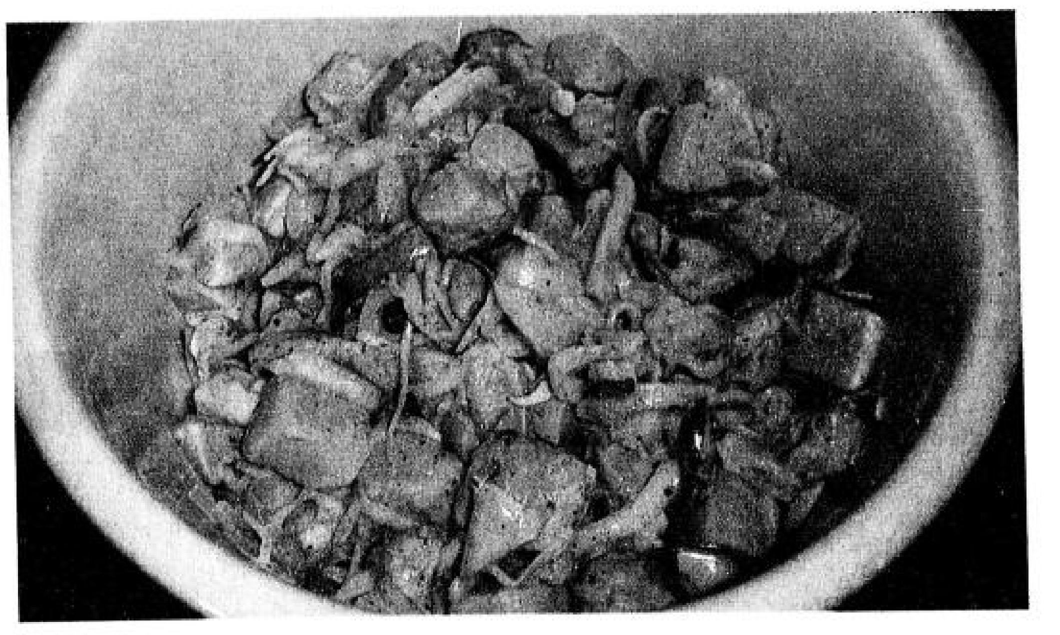
Experts know when it is time to remove the vinegar—the seafood is sufficiently “cooked” but hasn’t stiffened.

Mixing in the other flavors was the other important step. Everyone had ginger, salt and pepper. The extras were coconut milk, green mangoes and *calamansi*, bell pepper, chili and balsamic vinegar. The latter was new to me but it added sweetness to the prawns.

In the end, there were three different styles with different flavors. A small plate was done by a contestant who decided to strike out on his own, decorating his work with a *gumamela*.

Everyone tasted all the versions and found the flavors improved after a while. I forgot to tell them the other important lesson—allowing the mixture to steep for a while made for a better *kinilaw*.

The entries were wiped out before anyone could decide who won. If this was a serious contest, it would have been difficult to judge because the ingredients were different, the styles were different.



TANGUIGUE *kinilaw* cubes garnished with mango strips

The *kinilaw* contest was a fun activity added to the snorkeling and the swimming, as well as a tour of the wildlife sanctuary on Calauit Island.

Club Paradise is on Dimakya Island and El Rio y Mar in Busuanga, both in North Palawan’s Calamianes group of islands. E-mail reservations@clubparadisepalawan.com for reservations.

Seair flies directly to Busuanga daily. There is one flight a week from Boracay to Palawan as part of the “paradise to paradise” promotion. Call 8490100 (Manila) and 632-3414879 (Cebu).

Talk on careers in food industry

CHEF VICKY ROSE PACHECO will give a talk this April at Chateau 1771 El Pueblo on careers in the food industry for 2006 graduates thinking of going into the culinary/restaurant business.

The pioneering endeavor is open to those who dined March 15-April 12 at the Chateau with their family and friends to celebrate their graduation.

Graduates will have to present their school ID and fill up an information sheet to attend the sessions. Exact dates of the lectures will be announced later.

A session will be held each for high school and college graduates. Only a limited number of slots are available.

Pacheco, who will handle the sessions, is chief operating officer and executive chef of the Chateau 1771 Group of Restaurants.

The group consists of Chateau 1771, Sentro in Greenbelt 3, Portico in Malate and Sidebar Café in Malate and Ortigas. Catering service is also available.

Chateau 1771 El Pueblo is located at El Pueblo Real de Manila, ADB Avenue cor. Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 6317341.

Make salads for main course

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF Culinary Arts will conduct the following classes:

March 17—Main Course Salads 2006 (all-new): Chicken Liver Loaf with Soft Cheese and Honey Dressing, Warm Scallop Salad, Seafood Salad with Gazpacho Dressing, Meltique Tenderloin Salad in Citrus Curry Dressing, Cuttle Fish with Papayas in Lemon Grass

March 18—Chicken Wings: The Ultimate Buffalo, Teriyaki, Ginger with Peanut Sauce, Sweet and Spicy, Chili, Garlic with Garlic Sauce, Honey and Soy, Maple Teriyaki; side dishes, drinks, dessert

March 20—Wasabi (all-new): Phyllo Spring Rolls, Tuna Tartar with Wasabi Cream Sauce and Salsa Fresca, Crab Tempura with Caviar Wasabi, Cream Stir-fried Shrimp in Wasabi Butter, Delicious Angus Roast Beef with Honey Wasabi Crust, Wasabi Fried Rice, Salmon Belly with Sweet Miso Wasabi Sauce, Wasabi Potatoes; dessert

March 22—Fruits and Chops (all new): Sugar-glazed Grilled Pork Chops with Watermelon Relish, Apple Chops with Fruity Rice and Beans, Pork Chops with Rhubarb Chutney, Grilled Rack of Lamb Chops with Assorted Fruit Sauces—Cranberry, Plum and Currant; side dishes

Call 9289296, 9273008 or 6335162.

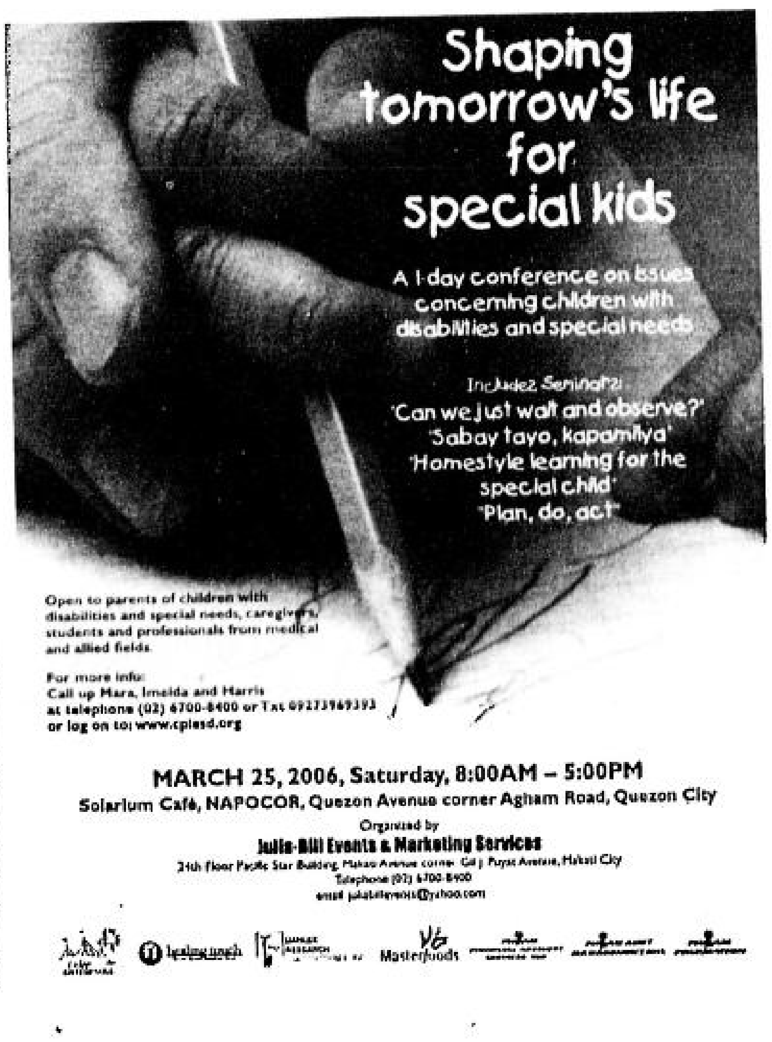
Kiddie cooking class

LET CHILDREN EXPERIENCE the wonders of cooking at Kids Kitchen Camp of the San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center.

The camp will be held 1-4 p.m. on the following dates: group 1—April 18, 19, 21; group 2—April 25, 26 and 28; group 3: May 2, 3 and 5 at the San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center, Legazpi corner Eagle Sts., Barrio Ugong, Pasig.

Open to kids aged 8-11, the camp will provide easy, step-by-step instructions on cooking and baking. Fee is P1,300.

Call 6719876 locals 402, 404 or 405, or log on to www.mygreatfood.com.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Call up Mara, Imelda and Harris at telephone (02) 6700-8400 or Txt 09273969393 or log on to: www.cplesd.org

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Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied in 6 cooking schools in Hongkong

ERNEST REYNOSO GALA
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

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GRADUATE : GUMPASTE & FONDANT W/ COLETTE PETERS, OCT. 05
ADVANCED WORKSHOP W/ COLETTE PETERS, CHICAGO, U.S.A. NOV. 05
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Graduate : Full Course, Thai Cooking School at the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok
Studied cooking in Europe, South America & Hongkong
Co-founder, Reynoso Cooking and Baking School, March, 1963

MAR 16 THURS - 2:00 - 6:30PM CASA ARMAS STYLE SOFT TO THE BONE SPANISH ROASTED CHICKEN W/ BABY POTATOES, THE YUMMIEST BACON WRAPPED MEAT LOAF W/ GRAVY; STEAMED THEN DEBONED, WHOLE LAPU-LAPU FISH SALAD; OUR BEST HAM MACARONI PARTY SALAD; GOOD OLE AMERICAN APPLE PIE P1,800. BY SYLVIA

MAR 17 2:30 - 6:00PM - POPULAR JAPANESE DISHES II - LEARN 8 DELICIOUS RECIPES! SHABU-SHABU WITH 2 SAUCES; ASSORTED CRISPY TEMPURA; GRILLED PORK & BEEF SLICE; UDON (VERY SPECIAL NOODLES) FRIED TOFUS IN SPECIAL SAUCE; BREADED CHICKEN WINGS W/ VINEGAR SAUCE; JAPANESE MIXED FRIED RICE. PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF COMPLETE SUSHI BAR. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

MAR 18 SAT 2:30 - 6:15PM - LEARN THE SOFTEST SIOPAO DOUGH EVER! THE MOST DELICIOUS SIOMAI. KUA PAO(PEKING SIOPAO W/ MEAT FILLING & PICKLED MUSTASA). FISH HEAD SOUP. CAMARON RELLENADO, QUIKIAM W/RADISH SALAD. STEAMED LAPU-LAPU P1,800. BY SYLVIA.

MAR 20 MON 2:30 - 6:15PM - LIGHT & AIRY ENSAYMADAS. CHEESE-ROLLS. SPECIAL EGG PANDESAL, PANDESAL W/ FILLING, CINNAMON ROLLS. BREAD BAKING MADE EASY! P1,800. BY SYLVIA

MAR 21 TUE; 23 THURS; 28 TUE; 30 THURS - 9:00 - 5:00PM - 4 LESSONS - MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING, P6,000. INCLUDING INGREDIENTS, LUNCH AND SNACK(EXCEPT DECORATING MATERIALS LIKE PIPING BAGS, TIPS, ETC. AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT THE CULINARY STUDIO OR BRING YOUR OWN. FLUFFY BUTTER CREAM ICING; TECHNIQUES IN COLORING BORDERS, SHELL, ROPE, STAR, LEAF, ZIGZAG "E" MOTION, FLEUR DE LIZ. MAKE GARLANDS AND SWAGS, BASKET WEAVING, LATTICE DESIGN 12 DIFFERENT DESIGNS FOR THE TOP AND SIDES OF CAKE. DIRECT PIPING OF CAKE OR ROSE BOUQUET. SWEET PEA, CARNATION. LEARN 4 KINDS OF ICING INCLUDING ROYAL TO MAKE SUGAR FLOWERS ON NAILS, TOOTHPICK, FLORAL WIRE. LEARN SUGAR MOLDING. HOW TO PREPARE DEBUTANT/WEDDING CAKES; TIERD,STACKED, ETC. EACH STUDENT WILL DESIGN AND DECORATE A WEDDING CAKE(STYRO) TO BRING HOME. PLEASE BRING TRAY/BOX EVERY LESSON. BY LENI R. ARAULLO.

MAR 24 FRI 2:30 - 5:30PM - MONEYMAKING CHINESE FAST-FOOD RECIPES. WONTON NOODLE SOUP, DELICIOUS MAKI SOUP; STIR FRIED LOMI, KUTCHAYDUMPLINGS WITH EASY TO MAKE HOMEMADE WRAPPER; PORK CURRY RICE, AUTHENTIC CHINESE STYLE SHRIMP FRIED RICE P1,800. BY SYLVIA

MAR 25 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM - OPEN A PIZZA PARLOR- LEARN TO MAKE THESE ITALIAN FAVORITES. MOZARELLA-TOPPED BIG & THICK CRUST PIZZA (BAKED IN A RECTANGULAR PAN) THIN CRUST PIZZA W/ DIFFERENT TOPPINGS. FETTUCINE ALFREDO. SPAGHETTI CARBONARA. BREADED VEAL STEAKS W/ LEMON. PEACH-FILLED CREPES W/ FRUIT SAUCE PLUS 12 BONUS RECIPES OF PASTAS & SANDWICHES P1,800. BY ERNEST

MAR 26 SUN - 2:00 - 6:30PM - 7 MONEY MAKING SAUSAGE COURSE 1 - GERMAN (BRATWURST); HUNGARIAN KIELBASA, MEXICAN LA; GREEK; SHEBOYGAN BRATS; BAGUIO AND CHORIZO MACAO. BONUS: ATCHARA & HOT POTATO SALAD P2,500. BY LENI R. ARAULLO

MAR 27 & APRIL 3 (2 MONDAYS) - 2:30 - 5:30PM - P2,200. MONEY MAKING CHOCOLATE FANTASIES COURSE. (#1 SELLER IN MANILA) CHOCOLATE COATED POPCORNS, CREAM FILLED CUPCAKES, STICKY WALNUT BROWNIES, CHUNKY CHOCO COOKIES. GERMAN STYLE FUDGY CAKE WITH ICING, CHOCOLATE TURTLE CHEESECAKE, BROWNIES, MELTS IN THE MOUTH TIRAMISU #2. BY ERNEST.

MAR 29 WED - 2:30 - 5:30PM - DELICIOUS RESTAURANT SPECIALTIES YOU WILL LOVE TO DO AT HOME - GARLIC - ROASTED CHICKEN WITH PEPPER SAUCE; MONTEREY BEEF TENDERLOIN CUBES SALPICADO; FETTUCINE WITH 3 DIFFERENT SAUCES. PESTO(GARLIC BASIL), BLACK SQUID INK, CREAMY MAYO CHEESE. HIGHLANDS SALAD WITH OLIVES AND BLUE CHEESE DRESSINGS; HOT CARAMEL BANANA FUDGE BROWNIE PIE WITH CREAM. PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF CENTURY TUNA BURGERS, BEEF BURGERS WITH DIFFERENT DRESSINGS. P1,800. BY ERNEST

MAR 31 FRI; APR 1 SAT; APR 2 SUN 9:00AM - 5:00PM - ADVANCED FONDANT WORKSHOP. COLETTE PETERS' STYLE (CONSIDERED BY WILTON & LIFESTYLE CHANNEL AS THE WORLD'S #1 CAKE DECORATOR. COURSE ATTENDED BY LENI IN CHICAGO OCT-NOV 2005). 3 LESSONS. P6,000. INCLUDES INGREDIENTS, LUNCH, SNACK (EXCEPT SCISSORS, CUTTERS, BOXES, CAKE PLATES, STYRO W/C YOU MUST BRING OR BUY IN CLASS). DAY 1: COLETTE'S WORLD FAMOUS TOWERING 'CROOKED CAKE' & 'PILLOW CAKE'. PERFECT, EASY, FOOL PROOF FONDANT RECIPE! ALL APPLICABLE CUT OUTS OR FLOWERS WILL BE PREPARED IN CLASS FOR THE DESIGN OF YOUR CHOICE. DAYS 2 & 3: CONTINUE & FINISH YOUR CHOSEN DESIGN. NOTE: PREREQUISITE: ONE MUST HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE OF WORKING & COVERING CAKES/STYRO W/ FONDANT TO ATTEND THE LATEST, EASIEST METHOD OF COLETTE PETERS TO BE TAUGHT BY LENI.

APR 4 TUE 2:30 - 6:00PM - VERY SPECIAL WELL-LOVED FILIPINO DISHES & SWEETS 1 - SUPER SARAP NA PANCIT MOLO; KARE-KARE NI ATCHING LENI; MECHADO, GUINATAANG MAIS; GUIA'S ILOILO RICE PUTO; CRISPY KANGKONG W/ 3 DIPS; UKOY ESPESYAL. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

APR 5 WED 2:30 - 5:30PM - MONEY-MAKING FASTFOOD RECIPES! YUMMY CHICKEN INASAL. S & R STYLE HERBED ROASTED MAGNOLIA CHICKEN, CAJUN BURGERS W/ SPECIAL SAUCE, SPICY MAGNOLIA CHICKEN BURGERS. BAKED POTATO CHIP MAGNOLIA CHICKEN BREASTS W/ PESTO LINGUINNE P1,800. BY ERNEST

APR 6 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM - 9 MONEY-MAKING FOR TEENS AND ADULT BEGINNERS: CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES; CHOCOLATE CRINKLES; BUTTERSCOTCH BROWNIES; LENGUA DE GATO; CHEWY MALLOW BARS, RUSSIAN TEA COOKIES, VIRGIE PANTALEON'S DATE WALNUT COOKIES; SPECIAL POLVORON; LEBANESE DATE BOAT TARTS. P1,800. BY ERNEST

APR 7 FRI 2:30 - 6:00PM - MERIENDA FARE: THE BEST, NEW RECIPE PANCIT PALABOK; LUMPIANG UBOD W/ HOMEMADE UBE & EGG WRAPPER; FRIED LUMPIANG SHANGHAI; MINI FRUIT CAKE BARS; SARAP-BAKED COCOROONS. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

APR 8 SAT 1:00 - 5:30PM - LEARN TO BAKE & DECORATE WILTON ALL OCCASION COOKIES ON POPSICLE STICKS USING ROYAL ICING. LEARN TO BAKE & DECORATE MUFFINS USING USING FLUFFY BUTTERCREAM ICING. P1,800. PLS. BRING 3 PIPING BAGS, 2 COUPLERS, 1 ROUND & 1 STAR TIP (ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT P300/SET AT THE CULINARY STUDIO). BY LENI (ABOVE USED BY BAKESHOPS & CRUISE SHIPS. IDEAL FOR HOME BUSINESS).

APR 18 TUE 2:30 - 6:00PM - 10 MINI CHEWY BARS FOR BEGINNERS; WALNUT BARS, MANGO BARS. LEMON BARS; BANANA CHIP BARS. PRUNE BARS; RICOA CHOCOLATE BARS; LEMONY NUT BARS; RAISIN BARS. DATE NUT SQUARES & CHOCO-MERINGUE BARS. IDEAL FOR BUSINES OR AS GIFTS TO FRIENDS. P1,800. BY ERNEST

APR 19 WED 2:30 - 5:30PM - EASY HONGKONG RESTAURANT COURSE - SIZZLING CHINESE STYLE STEAKS W. MONTEREY BEEF TENDERLOIN; SHRIMP & CRAB CLAWS & BALLS IN NEST W/ SWEET & SOUR SAUCE. HONGKONG STYLE ASSORTED VEGETABLE PLATTER; MAGNOLIA STIR-FRIED CHICKEN BREAST W/ CASUY; LAPU-LAPU IN CREAM OF CORN SAUCE; LOURDES' FAT CRABS COOKED IN GINGER-GARLIC SPRITE. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

APR 20, 27 & MAY 4 - CHILDREN'S COOKING & BAKING COURSE - 3 THURSDAYS - 2:30 - 5:30PM - P4,800 - INCLUDES INGREDIENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 6 TO 12. OVEN BAKED CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS & POTATOES; SHRIMP A LA KING IN MUFFIN CUPS. PARTY FRUIT SALAD IN ICE CREAM CONES; CHEESE MACAROONS. RAISIN WALNUT COOKIES; MEATLOAF SUPREME. YUMMY SPARERIBS W/ COLESLAW SALAD, MAGNOLIA CHICKEN SPAGHETTI W/ MUSHROOMS; MAGNOLIA CREAM CHEESE CHEWY BARS; TINY FRUIT CAKE BARS. CHOCO-PEANUTS IN PIE CRUST THIS COURSE IS GIVEN ONLY ONCE A YEAR BY MORELLA & SYLVIA. ONLY 30 STUDENTS WILL BE ACCOMMODATED. PAID RESERVATION IS A MUST. THANK YOU.

APR 21 2:30 - 5:30PM - DELICIOUS CHICKEN CORDON BLEU W/ CREAMY SAUCE; PAELLA NEGRA; SPICY SQUID RINGS IN GARLIC SAUCE, DEBONED LEMONY SOY CHICKEN ON WILD RICE; ORIENTAL SPRING ROLLS W/ SWEET CHILI SAUCE. EASY TIRAMISU P1,800. BY SYLVIA

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Star-apple theme for a kitchen star's birthday

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

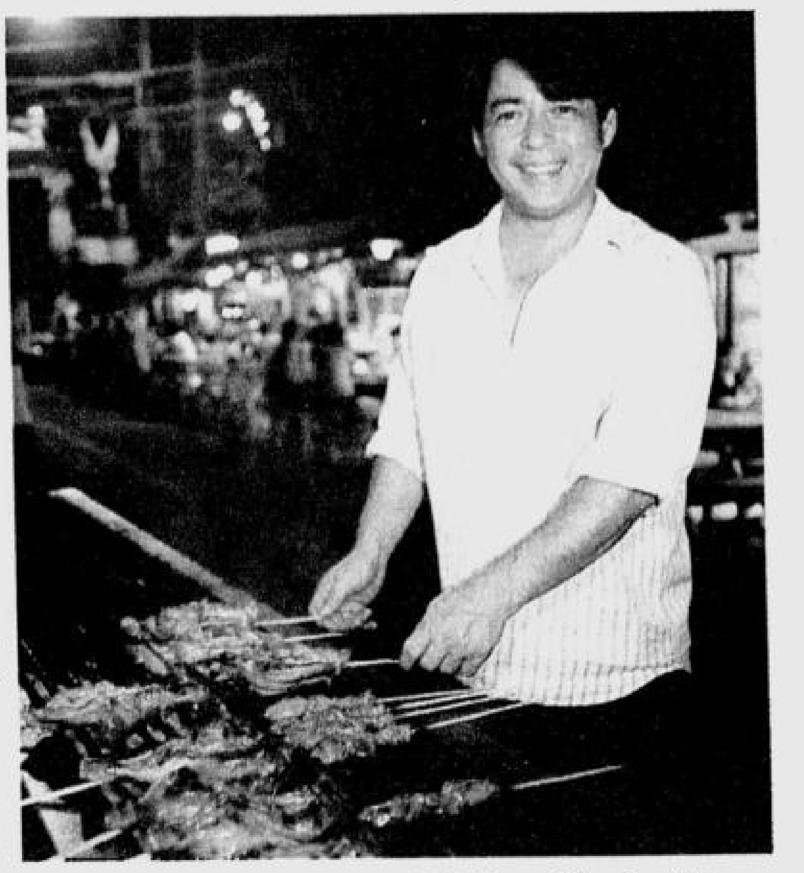
I RECENTLY TURNED 38. I was never one to look forward to celebrating my birthday but much had changed. I am now the mother to my beautiful 22-month-old son José Diego. Now that there's someone who calls me Mom, my birthday deserves some sort of celebration! So in thanksgiving I hosted a small dinner for just family.

Foie gras? Black angus? None of the fancy stuff, and no cooking for me! It was my day off! I wanted something simple, hearty and comforting.

Besides, the real reason I did not serve *foie gras* and angus is I did not want to spend! Like I said, I am now a mother and I must be wiser. There are better things to spend on, like pre-school! Having said that, though, there was no stopping the party!

> It was a charmed evening, graced with laughter, good food, and glasses filled with exquisite Beringer Pinot Grigio that went well with the 'inasal'

Off to work I merrily went and saw perfect star apples at Farmers Market. That completed the theme: Food "Bacolod" style, to be served on banana leaves on tables decked with centerpieces of fresh star apples and *eustoma* flowers in white with tinges of purple; a dessert buffet where everything on it had to be in star-apple hues; and, to give away, *sinamak* in woven baskets wrapped in *kaimito*-colored paper.



JOEL Torre grilling the night away

I called Joel Torre of JT's Manukan to ask if they cater. They do! I ordered my fancy *batchoy*, spareribs and, of course, chicken *inasal*. The menu started to take shape. I then called Bailon's for their legendary *lumpiang* Bacolod and to finish, our household staff was tasked to cook *tinapa* rice and make *mangga* salad.

Dinner was all set!

As for the *kaimito*-hued dessert buffet, it was filled with my favorite things: *taho* in *ube* and *pandan* flavors from Tofurrific; homemade *kutchinta* and *suman* in *ube* and *pandan* with *kalamay* sauce; Fortune Ledesma's Chocolate Cake (*o 'di ba* the bark of a *kaimito* tree is brown, or is it the back side of the leaf?); *marang* from Davao; Gene Gonzales' desserts (delicious Tocino Del Cielo and exquisite Tarta de Madrid) were a bit harder to color coordinate but then again, it was my party and I'd cry—in this case, serve it— if I want to, right?

What a party it turned out to be! My relatives didn't have it easy, though. They had to come in star-apple colors or they faced a penalty of P200!

It was a charmed evening, graced with laughter, good food and glasses filled with exquisite Beringer Pinot Grigio (it went so well with the *inasal*)! And all I had to pay JT's was P160 per head. The flowers, wine, etc., well, that's a totally different story!

God has been good and life has been kind. I thank you, readers of KR, for making it beautiful!

Sources

I can think of no better way to share the evening with you than by providing all the contact numbers of those I ordered food from, as well as a couple of recipes so that you too may share in the splendor of Bacolod and *kaimito*-themed food with those who matter to you the most!

JT's Manukan—(For P500 they take their griller along with a grill man and a waiter! For P200 more, you get Joel Torre... kidding! If your party is dressy, request waiters to be in *barong* or polo). Call 7219025 and 9288085, or visit 4 Granada St. Ortigas Extention or 26 Sgt. Esguerra St., Barangay South Triangle.

Gene Gonzales' Tarta de Madrid and Tocino del Cielo—if you want an impressive dessert, this *tarta* is it! It is too beautiful, so serve it only if you like your guests! Call 3732789-90.

Lumpiang Bacolod—Bailon's. Super *sarap*! Call 8436673.

Beringer Pinoy Grigio—Happy Living Fine Wine. Call 8956507 or 8960336.

Chocolate Cake—Fortune Ledesma. Call 8443663.

Taho—Tofurrific. Call 0917-8910886.

Eustoma* or *waling—cut-flower wholesaler. Call 9299310 or 9299306.

Food for thought... According to my favorite Bacolodians, Joel Torre and chefs Fernando Aracama and Jomi Gaston, *inasal* means skewed on a stick. It originally started with *espada* fish until the '50s when quartered chicken was experimented on by a family. Today it is synonymous to chicken. *Inasal* comes from the root word "*asal*" which means *ihaw* or grill.

Marilou Sialza's Delicious Mangga Salad

2 c Indian mango, chopped
½ c onions or shallots, chopped
½ c tomatoes, chopped
¼ c *guisadong bagoong alamang*, the sweet or spicy kind, your choice
1/3 c *wansuy*, chopped

Mix well. Let sit at least 30 minutes before serving.

Mini Kuchinta with Kalamay

1 c sugar
¾ c all-purpose flour
¼ c rice flour
1 ¾ c water
1 tsp *apog* water
1 tsp *lihia*
1 tsp *ube* or *pandan* extract

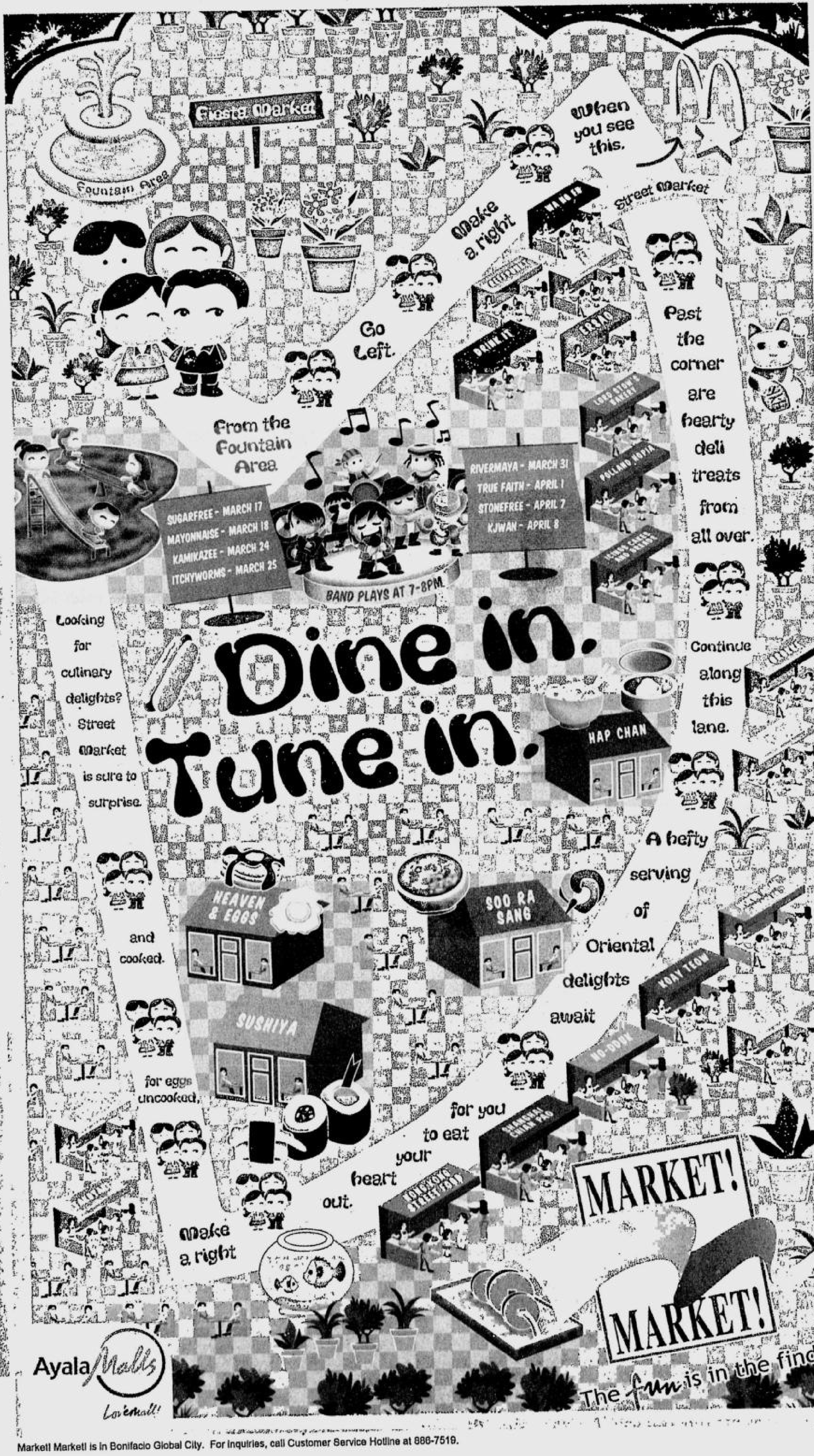
Combine all the ingredients, mix well. Pour greased mini muffin molds.

Steam 12 minutes.

Sauce:
1 c muscovado sugar
1 c *kakang gata*
¼ c +/- glutinous rice flour

Combine in a saucepan. Bring to a boil. Serve with *kuchinta*.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph


Fiesta Market
Fountain Area
When you see this.
Street Market
Make a right
Go Left.
Past the corner are hearty deli treats from all over.
From the Fountain Area
SUGARFREE - MARCH 17
MAYONNAISE - MARCH 18
KAMIKAZEE - MARCH 24
ITCHYWORMS - MARCH 25
RIVERMAYA - MARCH 31
TRUE FAITH - APRIL 1
STONEFREE - APRIL 7
KJWAN - APRIL 8
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Continue along this lane.
HAP CHAN
A hefty serving of Oriental delights await
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SOO RA SANG
and cooked.
SUSHIYA
for eggs uncooked,
KOAY TEOW
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Market! Market! is in Bonifacio Global City. For inquiries, call Customer Service Hotline at 886-7519.

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Adrenaline Rush: The BMW Xpo Month

BMW kicks off month-long event series

For the month of March, authorized BMW dealers nationwide are hosting Adrenaline Rush -- a month-long BMW Event Series featuring special dealer-based activities and exclusive ownership deals to prospective BMW owners.

The highlight of the BMW Xpo Month is an exclusive weekend event for BMW enthusiasts. From March 17-19, the BMW Xpo Central Event will feature the latest BMW products, special BMW Aftersales services, BMW lifestyle items, and innovative BMW Ownership Programs.

BMW Product Range: Exciting new model variants unveiled

The BMW Xpo Central Event will showcase the latest BMW cars, which comprise the youngest and widest model range in the luxury segment. Making its Philippine premiere are the newest additions to the BMW model range: the distinguished BMW 730Ld, the confident X5 Sport and the executive 523i.

The new BMW 730 Ld is equipped with a 3.0 liter, in-line 6-cylinder, diesel engine. This long-wheelbase luxury saloon is characterized by its refined power, unmatched comfort, and superior driving dynamics with the fuel efficiency of a BMW diesel engine.

The new X5 3.0i Sport Edition will also be presented during the BMW Xpo Central Event. Equipped with a specially designed aerodynamic package and high performance 20" inch wheels, the trendsetting BMW X5 Sport Edition projects an imposing muscular stance that perfectly complements the vehicle's dynamic character and performance.

Combining power and efficiency in one impressive executive package is the new BMW 523i. This latest variant of the 5 Series is powered by an efficient all-new magnesium-aluminum composite six-cylinder petrol engine, offering both a commanding and dynamic performance.

Premium Selection: The widest selection of Certified Pre-Owned BMW cars

BMW will likewise offer comprehensive information on BMW Premium Selection - BMW's pioneering Certified Pre-owned Program during the Xpo Central Event. BMW cars under Premium Selection pass through strict criteria including a 100-point technical check and are thus covered by a 12-month or 20,000 kilometer warranty. BMW is the only car manufacturer in the automotive industry that offers a warranty on used cars.

Customers at the BMW Xpo Central Event can have instant access to the complete line of pre-owned BMW cars being offered by all authorized BMW dealers through its Virtual Showroom - an interactive online car finder located at www.bmw.com.ph. With this innovative web-based service, prospective BMW owners can conveniently locate their pre-owned vehicle and arrange for a test drive.

Innovative BMW Ownerships Options

Owning a BMW during Xpo month is made much easier with the exclusive financing deals BMW Philippines in partnership with BPI Family Savings Bank. Prospective BMW owners can avail of a special deal of 50% downpayment, 24 month installment plan at zero percent interest on all variants of the BMW X5 and X3. Other flexible financing terms available are the 10% downpayment and 7 years to pay installment option on brand new BMW cars and the 20% downpayment and 5 years to pay installment plan on Premium Selection vehicles.

Special BMW Promotions: Win a Brand-New BMW X3 or a Year's Supply of Fuel from Petron

The complete model range of BMW cars will be available for test drives during the BMW Xpo Central Event. Complimentary leather luggage straps from Samsonite await the first 100 test drives. However, an added bonus is in store for one lucky test driver - the chance to drive home a BMW X3. All those availing of a test drive will be automatically qualified to join the BMW X3 Vault Promotion. Each test drive will give the test driver a chance to punch a 5-digit number combination to a vault which holds the key to a brand new BMW X3. The person who unlocks the vault instantly wins the BMW X3.

Buyers of BMW cars are also specially rewarded during Xpo month. For the entire month of March, every purchase of a brand new or pre-owned BMW car entitles the buyer to join a raffle where they get the chance to win one year's supply of fuel from Petron. Additionally, all buyers will receive a spa package for men from Institute Santre.

PETRON BLAZE

BMW Aftersales Services: Original BMW Parts and Accessories.

The latest original BMW parts and accessories are also featured at the BMW Xpo Central Event. Visitors will be able to see the latest BMW aerokits, alloy rims, exhaust systems, and various other accessories.

Those seeking to further individualize their BMW can virtually install the latest BMW accessories on to their BMW of choice through the BMW Car Configurator. This interactive program then provides an instant preview of the personally designed vehicle. A new BMW 3 Series specially fitted with the latest M Sport Aerodynamic kit will be on display to present the wide variety of possibilities for individualization that BMW provides.

BMW Lifestyle: F1 and M Collection available

The BMW Xpo Central Event likewise gives visitors the first opportunity to see and purchase BMW-Sauber F1 Team lifestyle items. The latest F1 gear from the new BMW Sauber Team will be on sale for the team's fans and other F1 aficionados.

BMW racing enthusiasts can also purchase exclusive items from the M Collection.

Welcome to the XPO

The BMW Xpo Central Event takes place from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the BMW Pavillion, Fort Bonifacio Global City. Visitors can expect a memorable BMW experience as well as a chance to win a brand new BMW X3.

The BMW Xpo is made possible through the support of BPI Family Bank, Petron, Samsonite, and Institute Santre

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Adrenaline Rush.
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Announcing a series of BMW dealer activities highlighted by an exciting BMW Central Event.

BMW Xpo 2006

BMW Xpo Month Activities
March 1 to 31, 2006
All authorized BMW Dealerships

- 50% downpayment. 0% interest for 24 months on selected BMW models
- 10% downpayment. 7 years financing on all BMW models
- Chance to win 1 year worth of fuel from Petron for every BMW purchase
- Individual dealer activities

BMW Xpo Central Event Activities
March 17 to 19, 2006
BMW Pavilion, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig

- New model introductions
- Chance to win a brand new BMW X3 for every test drive
- Surprise gifts for BMW Xpo Central Event visitors

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The new BMW 730Ld:

Smooth and refined diesel power

ANNOUNCING the distinguished arrival of the new BMW 730Ld

Combining comfort and performance with fuel efficiency

THE NEW BMW 7 SERIES MADE ITS DISTINGUISHED arrival as the most comfortable luxury limousine. In the Philippines, the 7 Series luxury saloon, which is particularly known for its rear seat comfort, has been available in the fuel powered variants namely, 730 Li, 750 Li and the top-of-the-line 12 cylinder 760 Li.

BMW Philippines further expands the available model range of the 7 Series with the introduction of the 730Ld, 3.0 liter in-line 6 cylinder, diesel variant. This long-wheelbase luxury saloon is positioned as the premium vehicle of choice for the discerning individual who enjoys driving by him- or herself. The new BMW 730Ld is characterized by its refined power, unmatched comfort, and superior driving dynamics with the fuel efficiency of a BMW diesel engine.

The new BMW 730Ld is powered by a silent and smooth 3.0 liter, inline 6-cylinder diesel engine that produces 231hp at 4,000rpm with peak torque of 520Nm available from 2,000rpm to 2,750rpm - the same torque found in the powerful BMW M5. Furthermore, the straight-six in the BMW 730Ld reaches a top speed of 238kph and accelerates from zero to 100kph in 7.8 seconds.

Despite its impressive engine power and performance, fuel consumption is rated at 12.2 km/liter (composite), making it the most fuel efficient car available in its class in the Philippines. This efficient power unit is housed in a lightweight all-aluminium crankcase using the latest generation common rail diesel engine technology.

Instead of the usual electric magnet technology found on common rail fuel injection, fuel is injected into the valves of the BMW 730 Ld diesel by way of a piezo-element. Whenever put under pressure, piezo crystals generate an electric voltage. Conversely, they expand in size when subject to electric tension, operating extremely quickly and with a very high standard of precision on the intake jets. This allows very precise calculation of fuel quantities resulting in more power on less fuel and cleaner exhaust emissions. It also leads to a significant reduction in engine noise and an improvement in motoring refinement.

Like the popular BMW 730Li, equipment level is equally high in the new 730Ld. The major trendsetting technological features include Adaptive Drive, fully adjustable electronic rear seats, and a state-of-the-art rear entertainment system that includes a TV receiver and a 6-Disc DVD changer.

Experience the refined power of the new BMW 730Ld -- now available at all authorized BMW dealers, namely Klassik BMW (Araneta Avenue - Quezon Avenue, Quezon City), Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Autohaus BMW (Quezon City), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Premiere Cars BMW (Pampanga) and Performance BMW (Cebu).

BMW unveils the new BMW 523i

Featuring the world's lightest six-cylinder engine in its class

BMW Philippines announces the executive arrival of the latest variant of the BMW 5 Series model range - the new BMW 523i

World's lightest six-cylinder: Efficient power with enhanced dynamism.

The new BMW 523i is powered by a technologically advanced aluminium-magnesium composite BMW engine. Weighing just 161 kg, the new straight-six engine featured in the new BMW 523i is the world's lightest six-cylinder engine in its class. This new BMW engine is two-thirds lighter than an equivalent engine made from steel. As a result, customers benefit from the reduction in weight through greater economy, enhanced dynamism, and outstanding agility.

The extraordinary low weight of BMW's six-cylinder is complemented by the engines' superior power and performance. This is largely attributable to the second generation VALVETRONIC technology offered for the first time in the 5 Series in the new BMW 523i. BMW's Valvetronic technology allows infinite management of valve opening times and control timing as a function of the gas pedal position which leads to improved engine response and efficient delivery of power.

In terms of performance, the straight six-cylinder 2,496cc powerhouse found in the new BMW 523i produces an impressive 177 hp with maximum torque of 230Nm, 95 per cent of which is available between 1,500rpm to 6,000rpm. It reaches a top speed is 235 kph and accelerates from zero to 100 kph in 8.5 seconds. Fuel efficiency is not compromised with the new BMW 523i achieving a composite fuel consumption rating of 11.7 km per liter.

DSC+ : Technological Advancement for a smooth and safe ride.

The new BMW 523i additionally features DSC+, a development of the widely-acclaimed Dynamic Stability Control system featured on every BMW model. DSC+ adds five features to the standard DSC: Brake Standby, Rain Brake Support, Hill Start Assist, Fading Compensation and Soft Stop.

Rain Brake Support recognizes the onset of rain (through a screen sensor or use of the wipers) and wipes residue off the brake discs in preparation for use. Hill Start Assist allows a manual transmission car to pull away smoothly on a gradient without rolling backwards by maintaining brake pressure for the short time taken to apply the accelerator after releasing the foot or handbrake. Fading Compensation removes the danger of brake fade when the brakes get hot by automatically applying them harder without extra pressure from the driver.

Brake Standby shortens stopping distances by priming the brakes if the driver lifts off the accelerator sharply in preparation for an emergency stop. The result is a car that has already commenced the stopping process in an emergency situation by the time the driver applies the brake. Soft Stop, meanwhile, allows the car to come to a perfectly smooth halt by releasing a small proportion of the braking pressure at the end of the braking cycle.

The advanced technology offered in the new BMW 523i thus results in an executive sedan with the perfect balance of performance and fuel efficiency.

The executive arrival of the new BMW 523i is now available at all authorized dealers, namely, Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Autohaus BMW (Quezon City), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Klassik BMW (Araneta Avenue - Quezon Avenue, Quezon City), Premiere Cars BMW (Pampanga) and Performance BMW (Cebu).

THE new BMW X5 Sport: Confident arrival at the BMW Xpo Central Event

The new BMW X5 Sport

Confident. Dynamic. Muscular.

BMW PHILIPPINES FURTHER expands the X5 model range with the limited offer of its latest variant - the new BMW X5 Sport.

Based on the BMW X5 3.0i Executive, this limited variant comes equipped with an original aerodynamic package, which consists of injection molded thermoplastic front apron, rear apron and side skirts. Also included in the X5 Sport are specially designed wheel arc extensions and high performance 20" alloy wheels fitted with Michelin tires. Put together, these components provide the new X5 Sport with an unmistakable muscular and sporty stance.

Aside from dynamic looks, the new BMW X5 Sport also delivers superior driving performance through its 3.0-litre straight-six power unit that produces a maximum of 231 bhp and 300 Nm of torque. The X5 3.0i Sport Edition reaches a top speed of 210 km/h and accelerates from 0-100 km/h in just 8.3 seconds. Composite fuel consumption, in turn, is a very efficient 12.7 litres/100 km.

With its trendsetting features, the BMW X5 Sport is the ideal choice for BMW enthusiasts seeking for the comfort features of a luxury vehicle combined with the practical features of a Sport Activity Vehicle.

The new BMW X5 Sport is available for a limited period at all authorized BMW dealers, namely Autohaus BMW (Libis, Quezon City), Klassik BMW (Araneta Avenue - Quezon Avenue, Quezon City), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Premiere Cars BMW (Pampanga) and Performance BMW (Cebu).

BMW Philippines
www.bmw.com.ph

Sheer
Driving Pleasure

The confidence to set the trend.
The BMW X5 Sport.
X5
BMW X5 Sport

The BMW X5, the founder of the Sports Activity Vehicle segment, remains the benchmark in sporting performance, all road capabilities and luxurious comfort.

- The new BMW X5 Sport is equipped with high-performance 20" inch light alloy wheels and a sporty aerodynamic kit.
- The intelligent XDrive four-wheel drive system boosts agility while ensuring the highest level of traction, safety and driving pleasure.
- Innovative technology like DSC (Dynamic Stability Control) and HDC (Hill Descent Control) contribute to outstanding agility and car-like handling characteristics.

The BMW X5. Confident Arrival.

Autohaus BMW 184 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Libis, Quezon City • Tel. (02) 6380734 • Fax (02) 4380419 • Prestige Cars BMW 2324 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City • Tel.(02) 8928127 to 29 • Fax (02) 8167325 • Autozentrum BMW Madrigal Business Park, Commerce Avenue, Alabang, Muntinlupa Tel. (02) 7726021 to 24 Fax (02) 7726025 • Klassik BMW 20 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City • Tel.(02) 7810689 • Fax(02) 7314433 • Premier Cars BMW CGC Building, San Fernando-Olongapo Highway, City of San Fernando, Pampanga • Tel.(045) 9637777 • Fax(045) 9633365 • Performance Auto BMW Magallanes St. cor. P. Burgos St., Cebu City • Tel.(032) 2563491 • Fax(032) 2563492

BMW and BPI Family Savings Bank announce new flexible ownership plans

The new BMW 1 Series. Trendy arrival for only 10% downpayment.

BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK
Drive your Dream AUTO LOAN

BMW PHILIPPINES and the BPI Family Savings Bank announce new flexible ownership plans for brand new and pre-owned BMW vehicles.

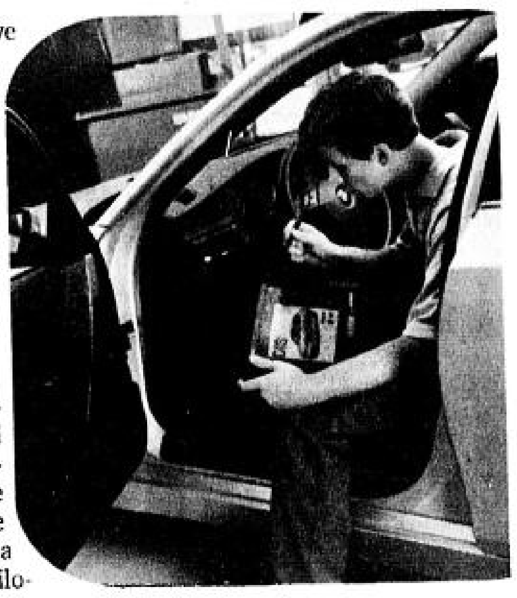
For the month of March, BMW customers can own a BMW X5 or X3 at zero percent interest for as long as 24 months with a 50% downpayment. Extended financing terms of up to 7 years are likewise available for all brand new BMW models, with a minimal 10% downpayment.

For those interested in purchasing a certified pre-owned BMW vehicle under the Premium Selection program, financing terms of 20% downpayment with monthly payments for up to 5 years are also available.

Customers can take advantage of flexible BMW ownership options at the BMW Xpo Central Event from March 17 to 19 at the BMW Pavilion in the Fort Bonifacio Global City. Comprehensive information is likewise available at all authorized BMW dealers, namely Klassik BMW (Araneta Avenue - Quezon Avenue, Quezon City), Autohaus BMW (Libis, Quezon City), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Premiere Cars BMW (Pampanga) and Performance BMW (Cebu).

The BMW Service Inclusive Programme - now available in the Philippines

For predictable, low cost expert maintenance



BMW PHILIPPINES INTRODUCES the Service Inclusive Programme -- a comprehensive service and repair programme that is the first of its kind in the local automotive industry. With this latest Aftersales product, buyers of brand-new BMW automobiles can take advantage of expert BMW care, genuine parts, specialized tools, and diagnostic equipment -- all for a one-time affordable price.

With this BMW Group approved international programme, customers who purchase a brand new BMW from authorized BMW dealers can enjoy comprehensive coverage of scheduled and unscheduled after sales service beyond the vehicle's standard 2-year unlimited mileage warranty period.

The various BMW Service Inclusive Programme options are a strategic investment for BMW enthusiasts who derive maximum enjoyment from their vehicle through frequent usage. With BMW Service Inclusive Programme coverage, these customers benefit from the financial security of predictable ownership costs, as well as the assurance against unexpected repair expenses.

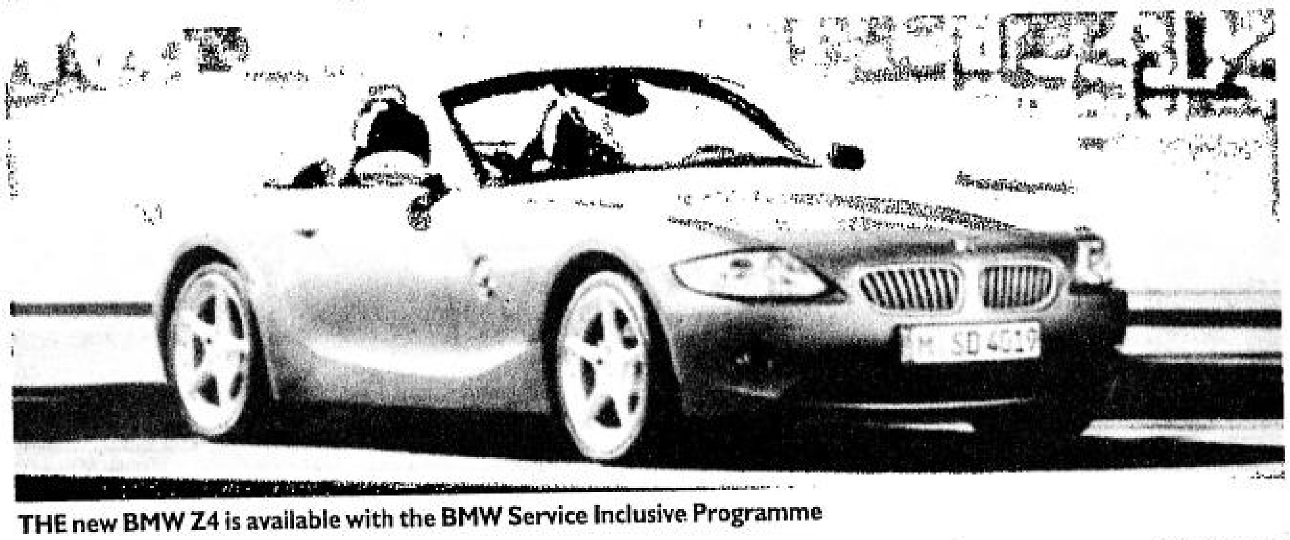
Additionally, since no payment is required at the end of each scheduled service on vehicles covered by any of the BMW Service Inclusive Programme variants, owners conveniently don't need to personally bring in their car for maintenance or repairs. BMW Service Inclusive Programme coverage is also fully transferable to subsequent owners for the remaining term of validity therefore contributing further to BMW's high residual value.

The BMW Service Inclusive Programme is available locally in three options:

- BMW Basic Service Inclusive - Covers change of engine oil and oil filter; servicing and replacement of air filters, microfilters, spark plugs, and brake fluid; and BMW diagnostic checks as set out in the BMW Service Booklet in the owner's documentation for a period of 5 years or 60,000 kilometers.
- BMW Service Inclusive - Extends the services covered under BMW Basic Service Inclusive to also cover the replacement of wear and tear parts, namely brake discs, brake linings, clutch (wear and tear only) and windscreen wiper blades are also included-- provided they are not caused by improper use of the vehicle. Coverage period is for 5 years or 60,000 kilometers.
- BMW Service + Repair Inclusive - Building on the service listed above for BMW Service Inclusive, BMW Service + Repair also extends the customer's warranty for the repair of defective components to 3 years or 60,000 kilometers.

The BMW Service Inclusive Programme is available to brand-new car buyers provided that the service package was ordered as an extra option within six months from the date when the car was purchased from all authorized BMW dealers.

The BMW Service Inclusive Programme is available at all authorized BMW dealers, namely Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Klassik BMW (Quezon City- Araneta-Quezon Avenue), Autohaus BMW (Quezon City-Libis), Premier BMW (Pampanga), and Performance BMW (Cebu).



THE new BMW Z4 is available with the BMW Service Inclusive Programme

BMW Philippines
www.bmw.com.ph
Sheer Driving Pleasure

An extended invitation to Sheer Driving Pleasure.

Presenting the first 7-year financing plan with 10% downpayment - on all BMW models.

- Low downpayment of 10%, starting at P364,000 on a BMW X3.
- Low monthly payments, for as low as P33,257 on a BMW X3.*
- Sheer driving pleasure spread across 7 years.

The latest BMW models – the youngest and widest range of models in the premium segment today – now available through BMW's new 7-year financing plan.

* In cooperation with Bank of the Philippine Islands.

BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK
Drive your Dream AUTO LOAN

Promo period from February 11 to March 31, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit Number 0961. Series of 2006.

*50% downpayment at 84 months to pay

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